CRASH

MICRO GAMES ACTION

No.10 NOVEMBER 1984

85p

THE PIRACY DOSSIER

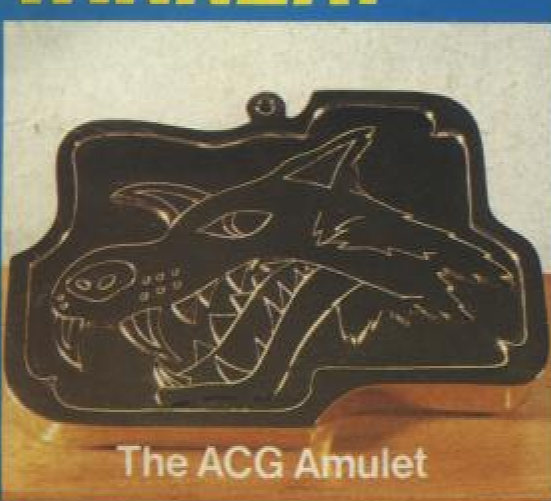
NEW!

MICROMEGA
JASPER

MICROSPHERE
SKOOL DAZE

AUTOMATA UK
DEUS EX MACHINA

SABRE WULF MAP WINNER!



The ACG Amulet



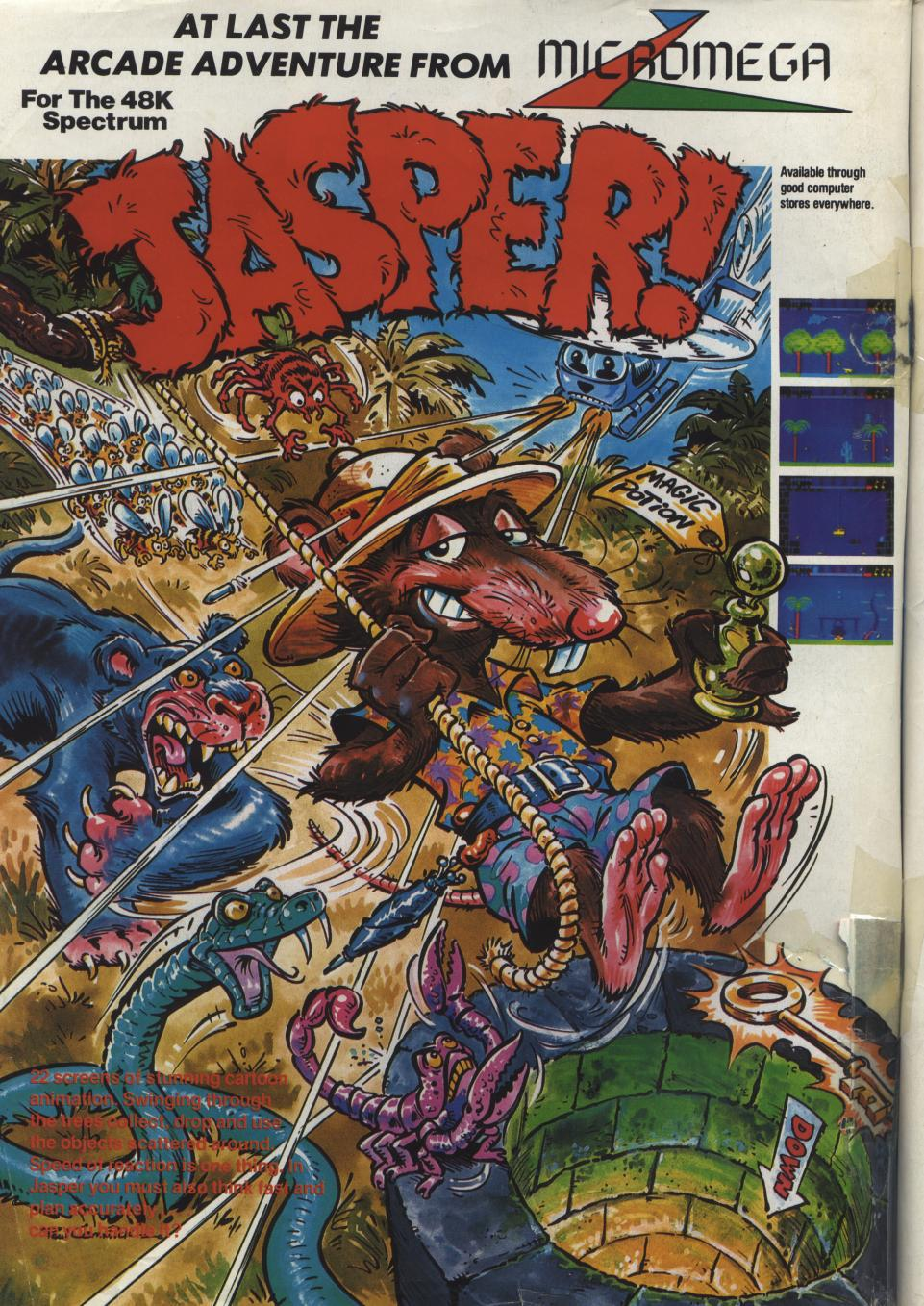
OVER £4000 IN PRIZES!

SPECTRUM

MONTHLY SPECTRUM SOFTWARE REVIEW

BATTLEFIELD JOYSTICK

We test 19 popular Joysticks to see if they stand the Decathlon pace!!



AT LAST THE
ARCADE ADVENTURE FROM MICROMEGA
For The 48K
Spectrum
JASPER!
Available through
good computer
stores everywhere.
MAGIC
POTION
22 screens of stunning cartoon
animation. Swinging through
the trees collect, drop and use
the objects scattered around.
Speed of reaction is one thing. In
Jasper you must also think fast and
plan accurately,
can you handle it?
DOWN



ISSUE 11 NOVEMBER 1984

MICRO GAMES ACTION

Contents

Features

Regulars

D.I.Y

Next Issue out Nov. 15th.

Editor
Roger Kean
Consultant Editor
Franco Frey
Production Designer
David Western
Art Editor
Oliver Frey
Adventure Editor
Derek Brewster
Staff Writer
Lloyd Mangram
Contributing writers
Matthew Uffindell
Chris Passey
Client Liaison
John Edwards
Subscription Manager
Denise Roberts
Circulation Manager
Tom Hamilton
All circulation enquiries should ring **021-742 5359**

Crash Micro is published monthly by **Newsfield Ltd.**, 1/2 King Street, Ludlow, Shropshire.

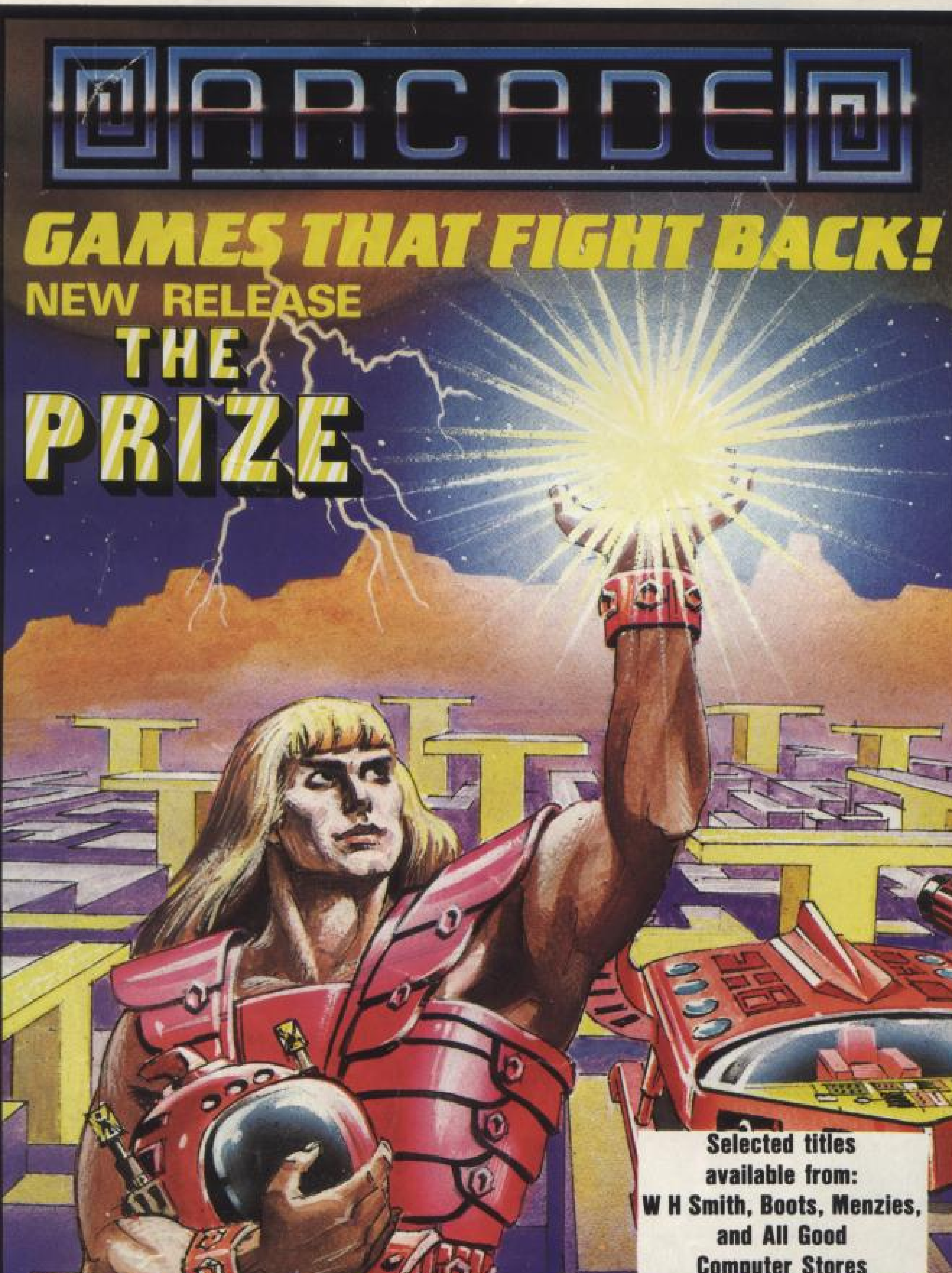
General correspondence to:
PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB

Telephone numbers
General office 0584 5620
Editorial/studio 0584 5851
Advertising 0584 5851
Hot Line 0584 3015

Photosetting by SIOS, 111 Salusbury Road, London NW6
Colour origination by Scan Studios, 44 Wallace Road, London N1
Printed in England by Carlisle Web Offset (Member of the BPCC Group), Newtown Trading Estate, Carlisle.
Distribution by COMAG, Tavistock Road, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 7QE

Subscriptions: 12 issues £10.50 (UK Mainland post free) Europe: 12 issues £17.50 (post free)

Cover by Oliver Frey

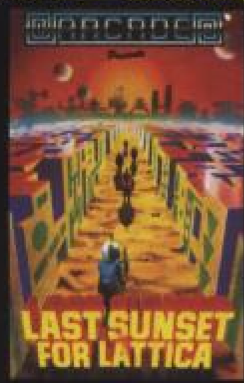




A
Fast-furious racing in this Arcade game for the Spectrum. 'Pontoon' on side B free!



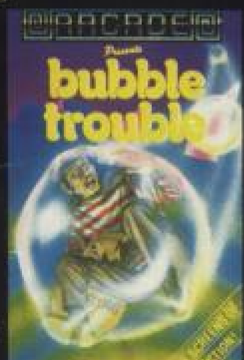
B
Funny goings-on deep in a mine. Can you escape the evil in its depths? "Original and fun . . . . dexterity needed . . . . strategy is also involved" — Games Computing.



C
Defuse a bomb hidden on the complex planet, Lattica, before it blows!! "... action packed game . . . addictive" — Sinclair user.



D
The mobs out to get ya' in this no-holds-barred 25 screen, action-packed game. "Tricky and highly entertaining" — Personal Computing News.



E
50 different screens of mayhem. "A fun game for all ages . . . . which I thoroughly enjoyed." — Home Computing Weekly.

F *The Prize* Your mission to discover the innermost chamber of Midas in a huge planetary maze. If successful you could be in with a chance of winning up to £5000! Only the strongest will survive the devious traps set by the guardians, but just imagine what you could do with the *prize*. . . . .

Cassette carries a special £2 discount voucher off your next purchase!

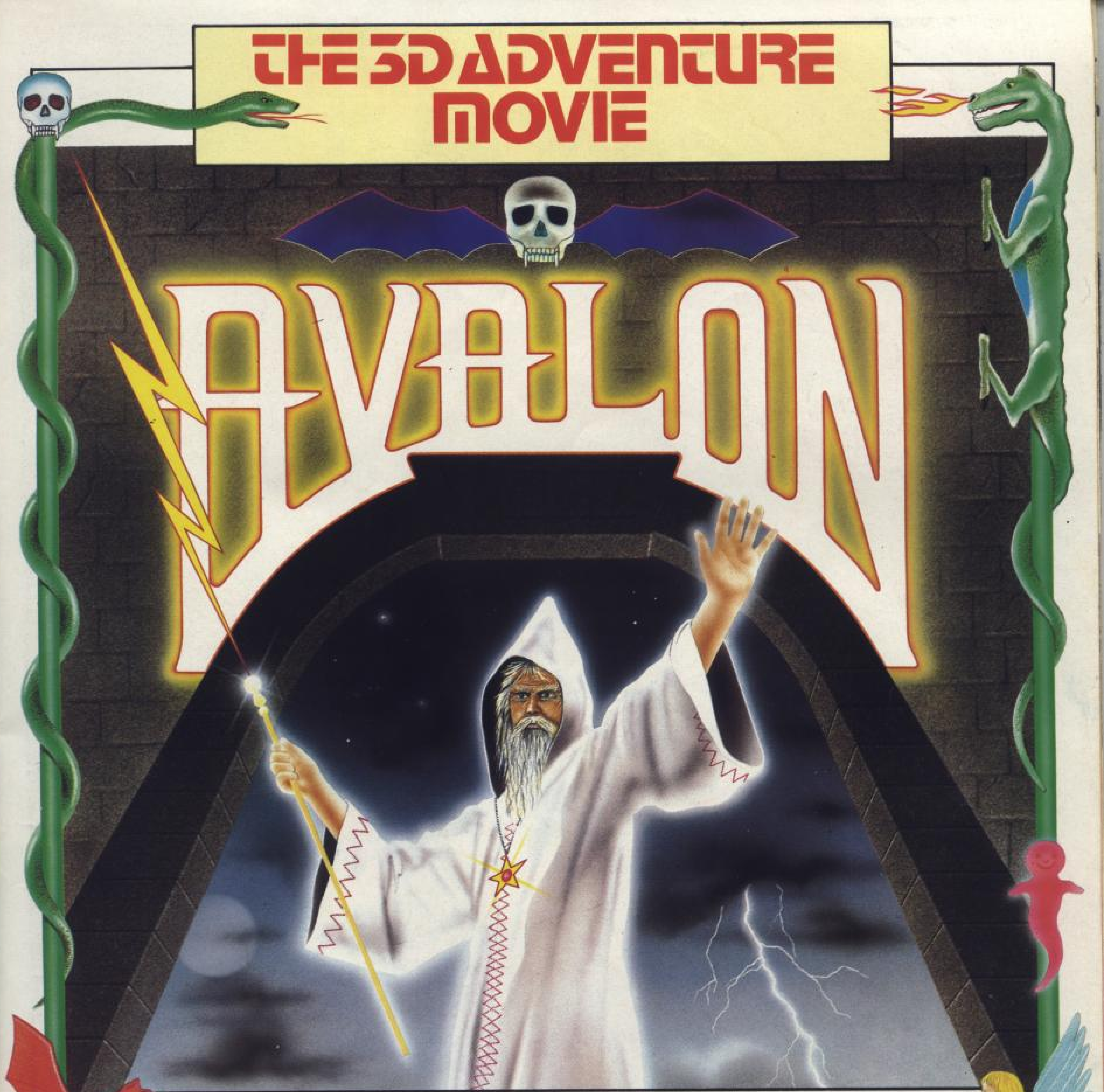
Dealers, please contact us for very special discounts on our games. Phone Orpington 35639.

Programmers. We are looking for high quality m/c games for the Spectrum and Commodore 64 home computers, send them in for evaluation. You have nothing to lose!

All games are for the ZX Spectrum 48K and cost just £5.50 each inc. p.p. VAT etc.

Arcade Software Ltd, Technology House,
32 Chislehurst Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 0DG
Tel: Orpington 35639

A ☐ I enclose a cheque for £__________ or
B ☐ debit my Barclaycard/Access Account★
C ☐ Name ____________________
D ☐ Address ____________________
E ☐ ____________________
F ☐ ____________________ CM9
☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐★



AVALON

For the first time ever there is an all action, 3D adventure game with stunning moving graphics – the unique Avalon.

Only Hewson Consultants could bring you Avalon with its awe inspiring animation. Avalon is the breakthrough that brings adventure to life. In this challenging game you must use your astral projection Morac the Mage to search into the heart of the Isle of Glass and forever banish the Lord of Chaos before he can subject Earth to the Dark Ages for a thousand years. You must explore a three dimensional world with more than 220 separate rooms and over 30 tunnels. On your way you will be challenged by over a hundred animated foes, goblins, wraiths, guardians and evil wizards. Your only protection is the magic of your spells. Avalon, by Steve Turner, is the adventure game of the year, and is available NOW! from your local software stockist. Remember, a world of graphic adventure awaits for only **£7.95**

Other titles for ZX Spectrum

3D LUNATTACK – Steve Turner
Fly your Hover Fighter over the 3D Lunar landscape battling the SEIDDAB.
Joystick compatible, 48K only **£7.95**

3D SEIDDAB ATTACK – Steve Turner
Using your radar, missiles and sixth sense clear the city area of SEIDDAB.
Joystick compatible, 16K or 48K **£5.95**

3D SPACE WARS – Steve Turner
Hunt the Seiddab through four levels of 3D hyperspace and destroy them.
Joystick compatible, 16K or 48K **£5.95**

NIGHTFLITE II – Mike Male
Flight simulation with full instrument display and perspective runway view.
Joystick compatible, 16K or 48K **£7.95**

HEATHROW AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL – Mike Male
Written by a professional air traffic controller.
16K or 48K **£7.95**

QUEST ADVENTURE – Kim Topley
Find a map hidden in an inhospitable world inhabited by gruesome creatures.
48K only **£5.95**

FANTASIA DIAMOND – Kim Topley
Retrieve the magnificent Fantasia Diamond and rescue Boris the master spy.
48K only **£7.95**

KNIGHT DRIVER – Clive Brooker
Steer your car round a tortuous circuit of roads, braking and accelerating as you go.
Joystick compatible, 48K only **£5.95**

Books

20 Best Programs for the ZX Spectrum **£5.95**
40 Best Machine Code Routines for the ZX Spectrum **£5.95**

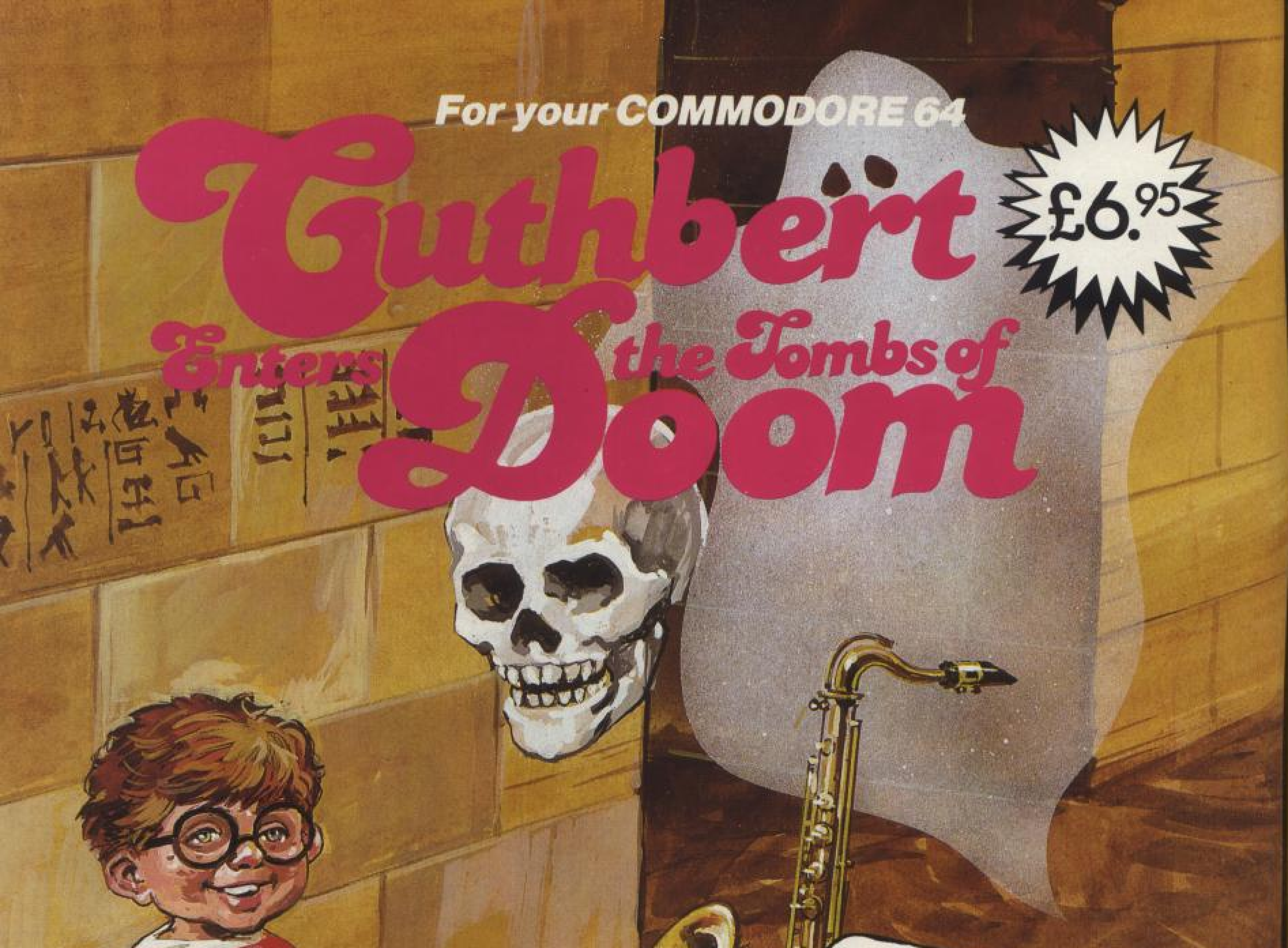
As part of our continuing development of innovative software we are always happy to evaluate software sent to us with a view to publication.

GSH

HEWSON CONSULTANTS

568 Milton Trading Estate, Milton, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RX

Selected items available from Centresoft Dealers and all leading computer software retailers:
WHSMITH Rumbelows John Menzies TIGER TRADER Spectrum LASKYS Boots HMV


For your COMMODORE 64
Cuthbert
Enters the Tombs of
Doom
£6.95
Our intrepid hero's BACK. In his latest action packed adventure!
INVENTORY
★ 200 PLUS LOCATIONS in ye High Resolution Graphics
★ My Olde Manual To help ye on thy way
★ "Evyl Ones" whych do inhabit the tombs
★ TREASURES in great abundance
★ MAPS & CLUES so ye don't get too lost.
Another Intrepid Hero
JESMON HYS

HERE WE GO AGAIN

Sequel to No 1 Game Jack and The Beanstalk

48K Spectrum £6.95 **CBM 64 £7.95**



by CHRIS KERRY



(Spectrum)

ACTUAL SCREEN DISPLAYS

The Most Graphical Arcade Simulation Ever Produced (Jack and The Beanstalk)

AVAILABLE FROM SELECTED BRANCHES OF:

John Menzies
WHSMITH
Boots
makro
Dixons Software Express
Greenchip
at DEBENHAMS
LASKYS

ALSO AVAILABLE AT ALL USUAL SOFTWARE OUTLETS.

RETAILERS CONTACT:

MICRO DEALER UK Ltd
Tiger trader
Lightning
R&R Computer Games
CentreSoft
PCS DISTRIBUTION
Bulldog

If you have difficulty in obtaining your copy, Just fill in the Coupon below.

Tick Spectrum ☐ CBM64 ☐

Post coupon now to: Thor (Computer Software) Co. Ltd., Erskine Industrial Estate, Liverpool, Merseyside L6 1AP Tel: 051-263 8521/2

I enclose Cheque/PO for £ ______

Name ______

Address ______

DISTRIBUTORS AND OVERSEAS ENQUIRIES CONTACT PAUL 051-263 8521/2

W·A·L·L·Y W·E·E·K I·N

A Crash Smash

PYJAMA-RAMA

Producer: **Mikro-Gen**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£6.95**
Language: **machine code**

Mikro-Gen's worn out working class hero Wally is back again – well he's almost back again in this new adventurish arcade game. Wally's actually asleep in bed and in danger of not hearing the alarm clock which ought to wake him up in time to get back to work in that appalling car factory. But Wally's having a terrible nightmare.

You star as Wally Week's sleeping alter ego, wandering around a vast house as a pint-sized figure in pyjamas and night cap. As this is a nightmare, nothing is as it should be in the dreamscape. Aparitions waltz about the place, hands snatch at your feet from beneath the floorboards, axes fly through the air, there's even a floor which gives you that feeling that you're trying hard but getting nowhere. The object is to find the key that winds the alarm clock and get it to wake Wally up. You are allowed to collect objects littered all over the place which have various inter-related uses, but only two may be carried at a time.

The controls are simple, left, right and jump. Being hit by a nasty isn't the end; above the playing screen is a glass of 'Snooze Energy' milk, which is drained a little bit every time you are hit, and goes down steadily throughout the life. Finding some food to snack on is as important as finding the key and alarm clock. Scoring is by quite a novel process – you are told how many paces Wally has walked and what percentage of the adventure has been solved.

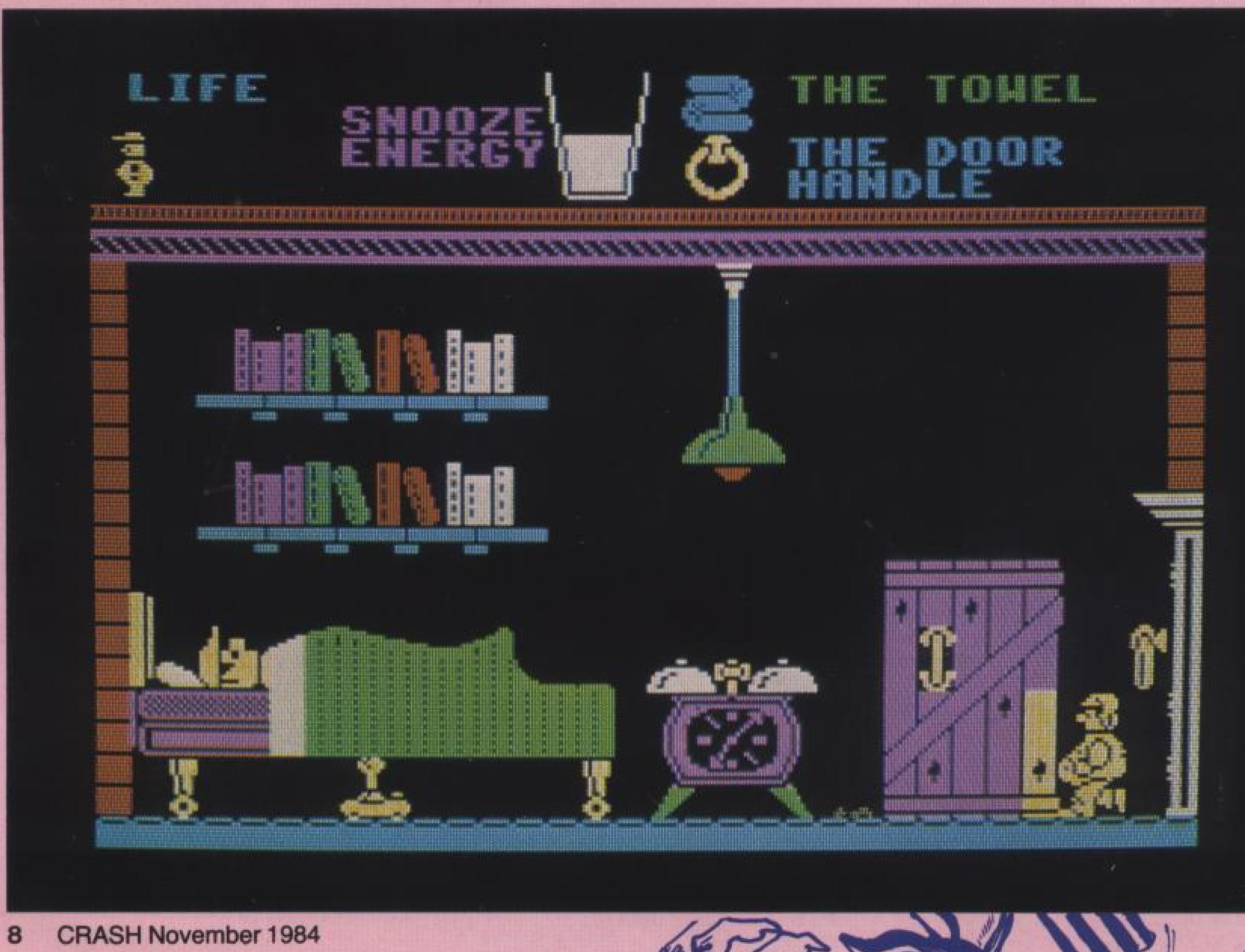
There seems to be a move afoot from software houses to repeat use of successful heroes, and *Pyjamarama* is a sequel to *Automania* – is it as good?

CRITICISM

● *'Pyjamarama'* has some of the best animation and realistic graphics I have ever seen. All the graphics are large, neat and smooth. As in *Automania*, Wally is superbly done with his night cap even moving as he slides down the bannister. The game itself is very well thought out especially when it comes to finding and carrying the things that help you in your quest to find the alarm clock. Beware of the 'Video Room'. I could not pull myself away from it for about six waves. I'll be surprised if this isn't a CRASH SMASH. I think it should be as it's a lot better even than the last one from Mikro-Gen, and definitely worth getting.'

● *'Okay Wally, don't just sit there suffering from your nightmare – do something about it! Yes, this is the sequel to* Automania, *the manic car game. You control a sleepy Wally in his quest for the clock. If you liked* Automania *you will love* Pyjamarama. *The graphics are superb and the sound is very good.* Pyjamarama *is a hit in anyone's book – it's got everything you could ask for from a game and more – the only way I can describe it is a sort of Manic Jet Set Wally – it's really an excellent game. You don't score as such, you are given a percentage and how many paces you took – I suppose it's better to have a high percentage with not having taken many paces. Quite a good idea really. The animation is a continuation of that found in* Automania *but with much more going on. The program's full of neat touches and I especially like the room behind a door marked Video Games where you can play a*

Nightmare Wally meets sleeping Wally



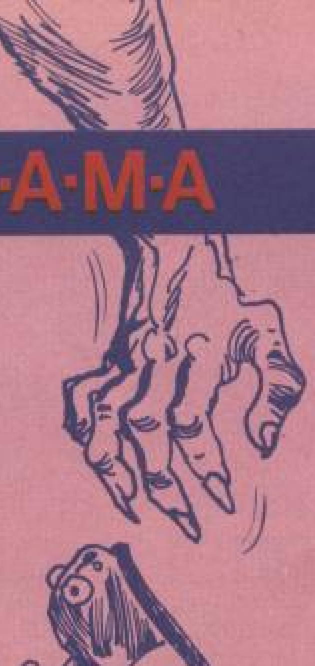


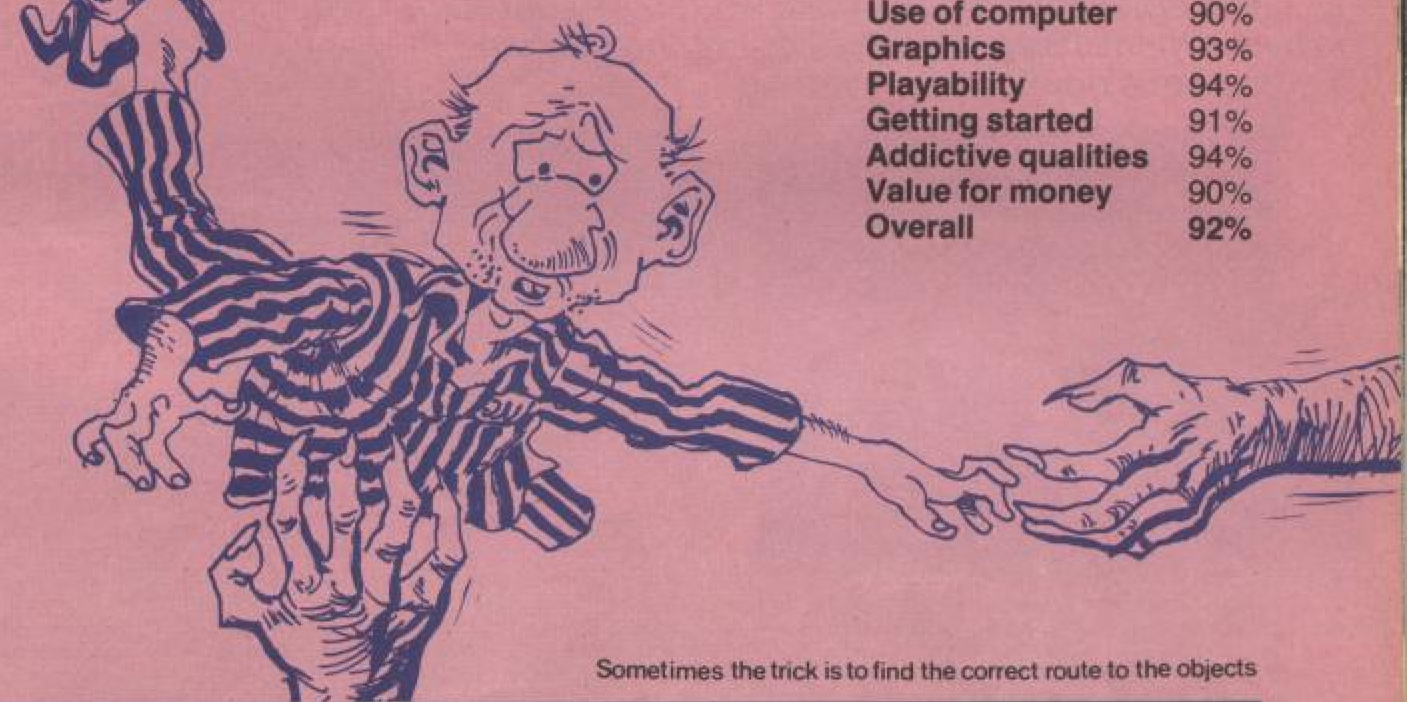


P·Y·J·A·M·A·R·A·M·A

good game of Space Invaders – so you're really getting two games for the price of one! It's highly playable and just a bit too addictive. Buy it – you won't regret it!'

● 'As a simple combination of imaginative graphics, large characters and humour, *Pyjamarama* is unbeatable, and a fine sequel to *Automania*. I thought it had just the right amount of frustration and play-again qualities to drive you mad – and make sure you do play again. Wally is in fine jumping form again even though he's shrunk down to the point where tomorrow's chicken dinner becomes a serious threat. There are surprises everywhere like the prat-fall boxing gloves which knock you down when you're not expecting it, and it takes an experienced hand to spot the difference between a lift seen from the side and an ordinary door. Mikro-Gen have been thoughtful enough to provide a large switch, however, marked lift on/off! (But that's in a different location). Undoubtedly an addict's dream hit.'



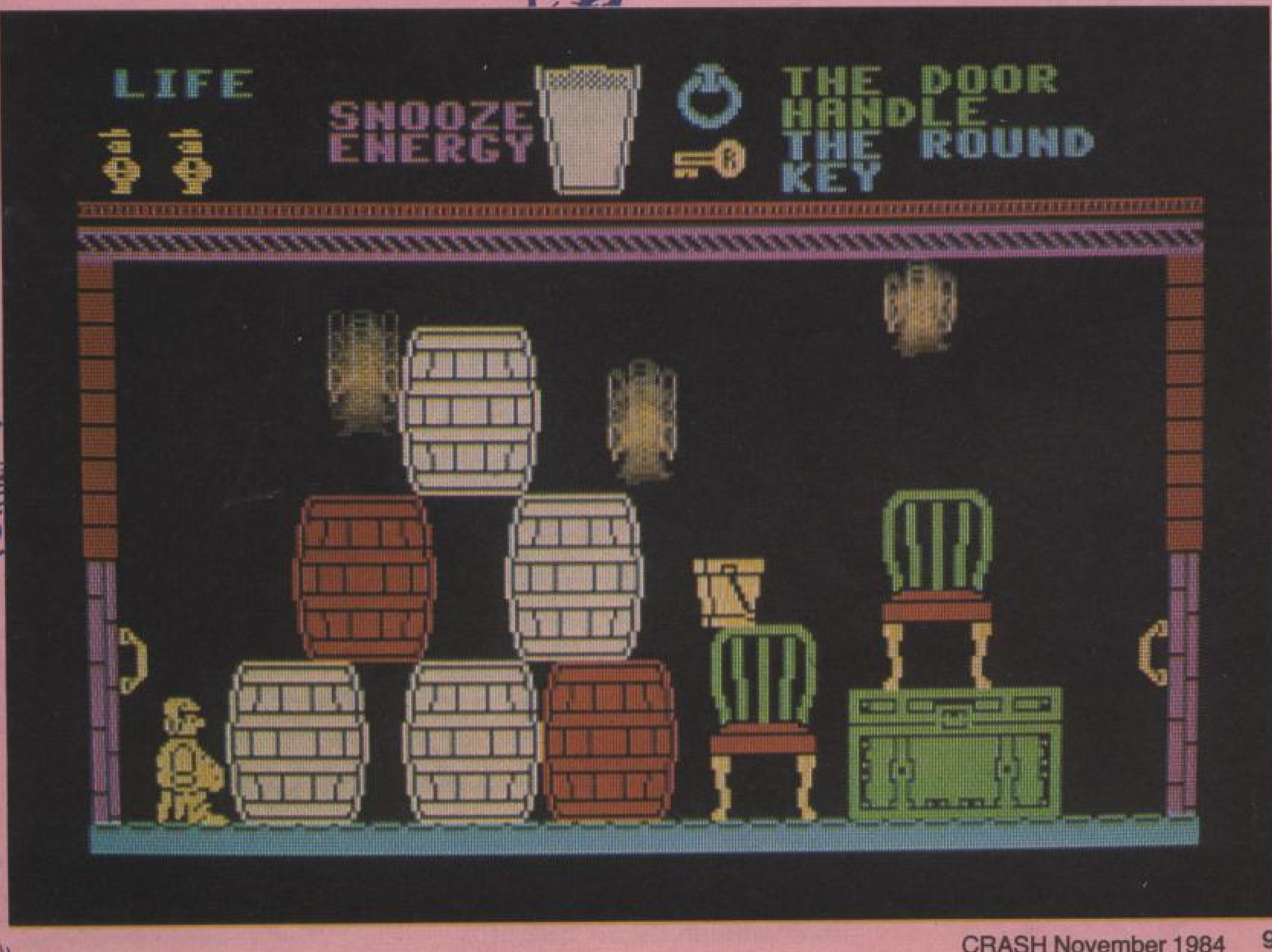


COMMENTS

Control keys: O/P left/right and M to jump, but also user-definable
Joystick: Sinclair, Kempston, but almost any via UDK
Keyboard play: very simple key use and responsive
Use of colour: marvellous, painterly use of colour, although it risks some attribute problems
Graphics: excellent, large, fast and smooth, well drawn
Sound: very good
Skill levels: 1
Lives: 3 (watch out for Snooze Energy)
General rating: highly addictive, playable, good value – excellent.

Use of computer	90%
Graphics	93%
Playability	94%
Getting started	91%
Addictive qualities	94%
Value for money	90%
Overall	**92%**

Sometimes the trick is to find the correct route to the objects



NEW!

FOR SPECTRUM 48K

BEST of the BEST

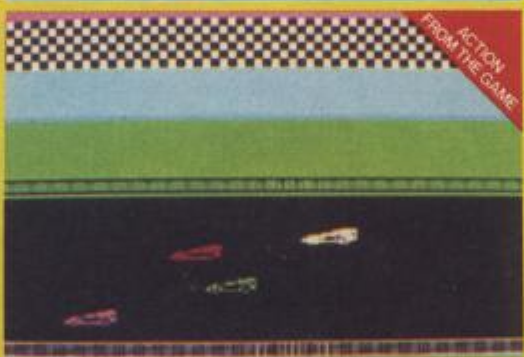


A RANGE OF SOFTWARE SELECTED BY KEVIN TOMS

"Over the past few months many people have sent me the best software that they have written and asked me to publish it for them. I've picked the best of the best and they are available now from Silicon Joy"

Kevin Toms

GRAND PRIX MANAGER £6·95



ACTION FROM THE GAME

"This excellent strategy game puts you in charge of a Grand Prix team and your task is to try and win the Team Championship."
Features: Race Action ★ Driver selection ★ Racing Car Engineering ★ Mechanics ★ Finances ★ Sponsorship problems ★ Crashes etc.

BOXING £5·95



ACTION FROM THE GAME

"A 2 or more player Boxing game in which you fight your oponents with excellent on screen fight action. There is even a **World Championship league** included in the game!"

RUN-YOUR-OWN -LEAGUE Requires Printer £6·95

ACTUAL PROGRAMME OUTPUT

```
SCORES FOR FIXTURE WEEK 3
1  Addictive R.   v Stourvale A
               5    0
2  Corinthians    v Richmond Utd
               2    2
3  Wimborne W.    v Kings Arms
               2    1
4  AFC Spectrum   v Red Lion
               1    1
5  Poole OB       v Charminster
               3    0
```

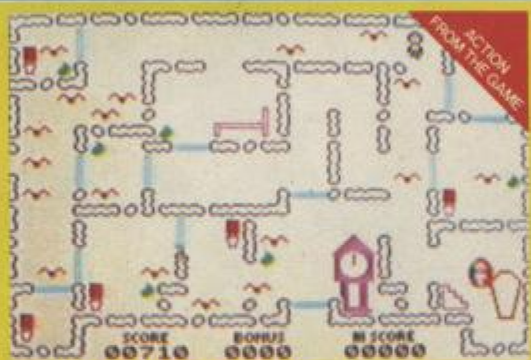
"A very useful utility program which allows anyone to run a League with ease. This professional program is designed to be used for almost any sport or game and has many features."
E.g. Up to 30 teams per division ★ Match cancellation/award ★ League Tables calculated ★ Variable points systems etc. etc.

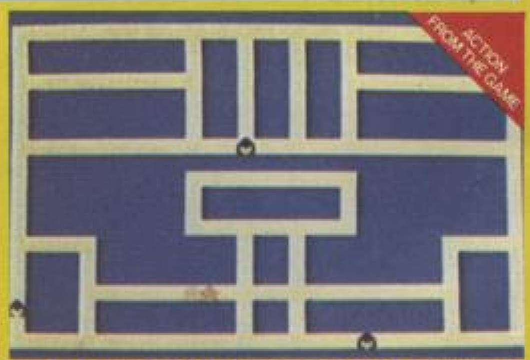
TRIO

3 quality games on one cassette for just £5.95 (under £1.99 each!)

TRIO







ACTION FROM THE GAME

ASCOT – "an excellent horse racing gambling game with superb race graphics." Realistic odds and up to 6 players per season.

+

DRACULA'S CASTLE – "This is an amusing arcade game in which you must run around the castle to switch the lights on while avoiding the vampire bats. Beware of sleeping Dracula as lights wake him from his coffin. Can you survive till dawn!"

+

CHAOTIC CAVERNS – "A highly addictive maze chase game with 7 caverns. What really makes this game is that it requires a high degree of strategy to master it."

Look for the yellow packs in Software Stockists nationwide.



SILICON Joy

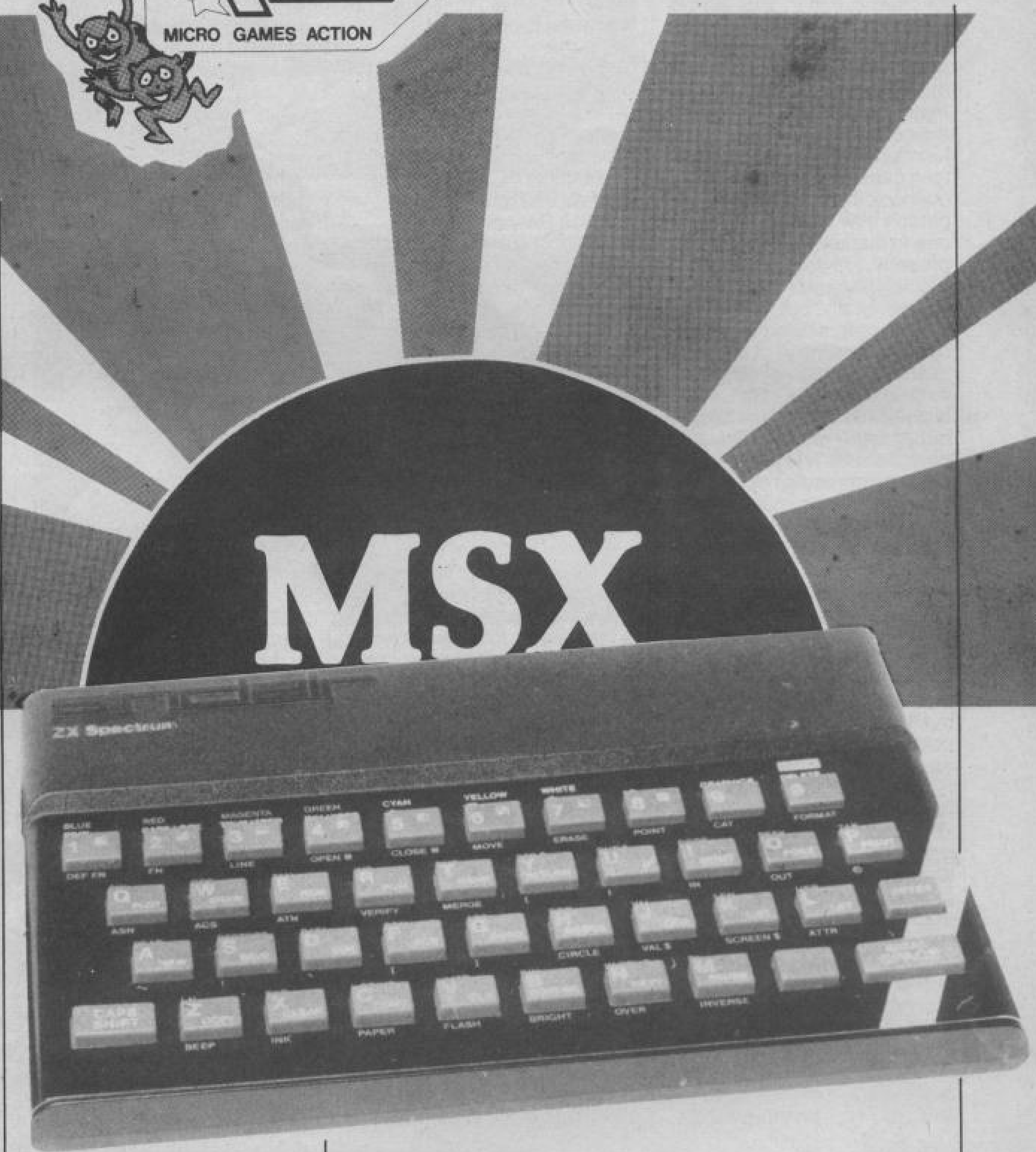
To order by mail *(p&p free)* send cheques/P.O.s to:

Silicon Joy, 7A Richmond Hill Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6HE

Programmers
We want your software. Send us a sample, if accepted, we will supply generous royalties plus free advice from Kevin himself!

A division of Addictive Games Ltd.

MICRO GAMES ACTION



TOWARDS A SOUND PICTURE

It was probably unfair and untrue – the remark one of my colleagues passed while standing in the queue at five to ten waiting for the doors of the Personal Computer Show at Olympia to open – that the large group of camera-dangled Japanese were the long-awaited MSX delegation. After all, the gentlemen in question looked suitably sober, whereas the real MSX delegation must have been doubled over in laughter at the extraordinary snub they had purposely offered to Europe's most prestigious micro trade show. For on Wednesday 19th of September, the trade and press day for the PCW Show, microcomputer journalists had been jetted to the shores of the Mediterranean for a day trip to Juan-Les-Pins for the official launch of the MSX range of machines.

The Japanese are now set to conquer, preferably trampling underfoot British micros which may not have been a great hit in the States, but have nevertheless set the pace of development in an extraordinary way. The masive press campaign is starting, hoping to persuade us into forgetting that MSX is sadly sub-standard. In fact it's over-rated, over-priced and over here. I have heard the argument that MSX will not seriously affect the existing Spectrum market because MSX – (machines that look cosy beside your expensive hi-fi cabinets) – will attract a new market, the middle-aged nouveau hacker. Well that may be the case, but I think it's ignoring the fact that with a soundly established range of micros on the market which all accept a single type of cassette, software houses in their own interests are bound to treat that market more seriously in the end. Will we see the day when the occasional Spectrum game is issued solely for the prestige value it brings?

The British have always been a bit quaint when it comes to commercial exploitation of a new invention. We have a history of egocentric genius inventors failing to make the big international grade with a good idea. Yet we British also love what they represent, the unquenchable spirit to create. Americans develop in close-knit teams, Japanese design in hit-squads, but the British invent alone. Well it's not all true of course, but I bet if you ask most people who designed and built the Spectrum they all answer, Sir Clive Sinclair! (No one would seriously consider anything as

GAMES REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE

unromantic as Sinclair Research). This propensity of ours for deifying a figurehead has its drawbacks though. It may put too much pressure on the person, disenabling the function of thinking clearly. It may cause everyone to overlook the fact that the person may not be the ideal one to market the invention properly. I'm not saying that Sinclair Research hasn't done well generally, but the Spectrum has failed to really catch the attention of the international market despite its time advantage. Sir Clive himself seems to have taken a rather micro-utopian view of his machines and has a distinct impression of the future that has forgotten that his best machine (certainly the most successful) is a games machine competing in a market where other machines have advantages that the Spectrum could have had – indeed, could still have.

Spectrum owners have been almost fanatically loyal but the most common complaint nevertheless is about its sound capabilities. Recent translations of games from the Commodore 64 with its far more arcade-like graphics, have still shown well against the 64 originals, indeed in many cases have actually been an improvement. Yet we still have to look at games that are prevented from being graphically better than anything on the 64 because of the colour attribute problems. I've lost count of the times that a CRASH review has said, 'lacks colour, but this avoids the worst problems of attributes'.

I don't know how much these two extras would cost, whether they should be considered as something to be built into a new series of Spectrums or offered as an add-on unit, but I do think Sinclair Research should seriously consider them. There was talk, at one point earlier this year, of designing a new Spectrum somewhere in between the existing one and the QL, still a games machine but with a better keyboard (perhaps), sound and video display. Perhaps the arrival of MSX has made it commercially impossible to expend time and marketing money to ensure the sale of what would be an entirely new machine. But if that is the case (as I suspect it is) then the other alternative must be considered urgently. It seems a terrible pity to throw away all that Spectrum programmers have achieved in such an astonishingly short time, by letting it become swamped by inferior machines. After all, the design of the Spectrum may have been due to the genius of one man's vision (and a dedicated team of electronics designers), but the scale of its success is also due to the extraordinary levels of invention by games programmers. The Spectrum no longer belongs to Sir Clive Sinclair to do with as he will. I am convinced that with drastically improved sound and graphics display, taken together with some of the marvellous programs that are currently being developed, that the Spectrum will stem the MSX floodtide, and then perhaps software houses will still see the computer as a viable machine in the future for those people who genuinely enjoy playing games that are more than games but mind- and reaction-stretching vehicles, and leave MSX to be the middle-aged coffee table toy where it need do no more harm than any TV encased in a fake rosewood cabinet.

ADVENTURES OF JETMAN

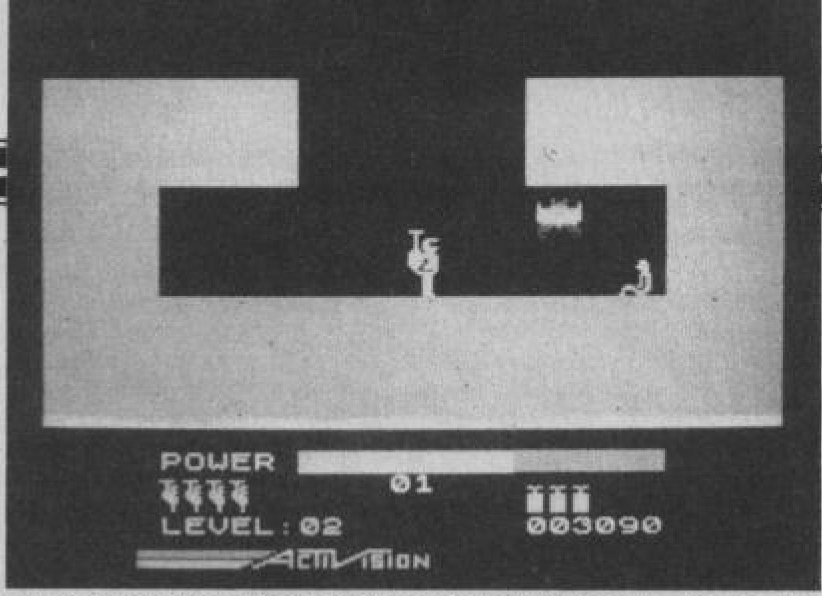
Good news for fans of our comic strip from Ultimate. In both the December and Christmas Special issues, there will be a double helping of Jetman presented as a double-page spread. Judging by many of your letters, Jetman has become a firm favourite, so we are very pleased that Ultimate are happy to supply us with more pages of the idiot space hero for the Christmas period.



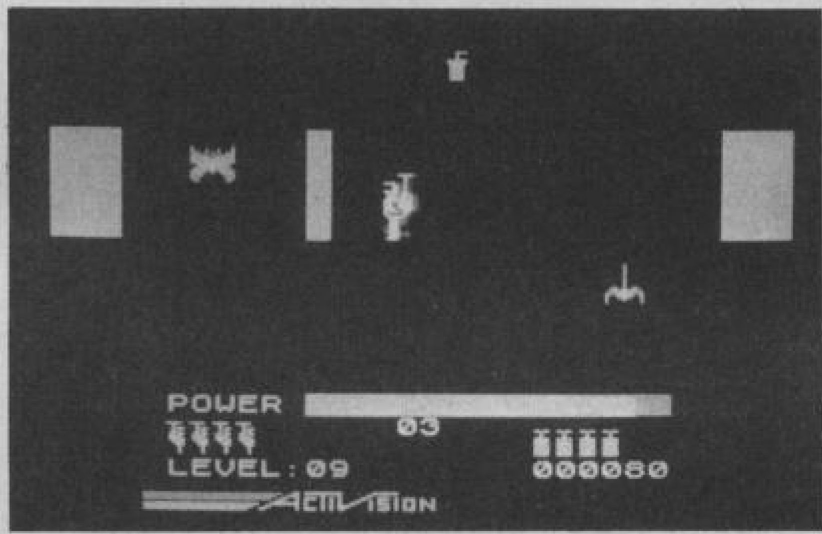
ADVERTISERS INDEX

H.E.R.O.

Producer: **Activision**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **John Van Ryzin**



Hello frail, abandoned miner, I'm here to rescue you. You don't know me, but my name's HERO – Roderick Hero.



Rod HERO boldly faces up to some aliens and a magma wall.

Roderick Hero (R. Hero for short) is an all-round American good guy whose greatest joy in life is to go around rescuing people. In the case of this particular game it happens to be a bunch of miners who are trapped in the deepest recesses of a nightmare mine. The object is to rescue as many as possible before dying! The miners, resembling shipwrecked mariners, are obviously pleased to see R. Hero when he arrives because they raise a weary hand and wave at him as much as to say, 'Go away.'

As R. Hero you are equipped with a reasonably heat resistant suit and mini helicopter blade on top. The suit also has a head-mounted micro laser for blasting the varied nasties that thrive in the warm depths of this mine complex. The mine seems to have been okay until volcanic activity released lava into the shafts and tunnels with the result that some of the walls and floors are red hot and kill on contact. The other useful device Rod has considered is dynamite – six sticks of the stuff. This is dropped near to a wall and blasts it away. Alternatively walls can be blown apart with the laser except this takes up time and uses energy, which is limited.

The mines are large with each screen only showing a small area of the total. The object is to rescue a miner at each level of play. Level one is dead simple to get you used to the idea. By level 4, however, you are finding much more complex mazes, more creatures, more magma walls and the fact that in some places the lights don't work. You can also put out the lights accidentally by touching or shooting one. In this event feeling your way around is the only alternative, unless you have some dynamite left – lighting a stick is rather like lighting a candle. Rod Hero, of course, having lit a stick, must retreat quickly or get caught in the blast. Points are scored for killing nasties and for rescuing miners, with a bonus being added in the form of how many sticks of dynamite are left. An energy bar is situated under the display area and failure to rescue a miner before this runs out will result in the loss of one life. Rather as in *River Raid* there is a level starting option to allow more skilled players to enter the game at higher levels – 5, 9, 13, or 17.

CRITICISM

● 'Can't say I've seen this one before. It's a highly original game. The graphics are good and the effect of the dynamite going off is – explosive! This is a very good play, although unfortunate that it should be in the Atari/Activision price bracket. I liked the effect of the water (or is it lava) at the bottom of the shafts very much. I found it to be a very challenging game and even the demo can tire you out!

● *'H.E.R.O. is the best of the four Activision games just released for the Spectrum. The graphics are not particularly brilliant but serve their purpose well and the sound is fine. The best thing about the game is that it's very addictive and fun to play. It's certainly a challenge because the better you get and the further you go the harder and harder the game becomes. I still think Activision games are a bit pricey, but this is still a very good game!*

● '*H.E.R.O.* is enormous fun to play and very addictive with just the right amount of frustrating and challenging ingredients to keep you going just when you thought you might give up. As a hero Roderick isn't exactly a stunning graphic but I do like his little helicopter blade. And that's the only point I found a little irritating – his thrust is a bit slow to come on. Perhaps this is intended to be realistic but it can leave you in some very awkward situations and kill you off when you least expect it to. Had it been £6 instead of £8 I would have given it a very high value for money alongside the other ratings, but this is a bit steep, especially in the face of some much better looking budget software recently.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: 2/A thrust/dynamite, O/P left/right, E for laser
Joystick: Kempston, Sinclair, Protek, AGF
Keyboard play: reasonable positions although fire is slightly odd, but responsive once used to slow thrust
Use of colour: good, bright and lively
Graphics: simple but effective, smooth moving
Skill levels: 5 actual entry levels but many overall on progressive basis
Lives: 5
Screens: numerous
General rating: very good, original, addictive and fun, but still a bit pricey.

Use of computer	76%
Graphics	72%
Playability	79%
Getting started	75%
Addictive qualities	79%
Value for money	70%
Overall	**75%**





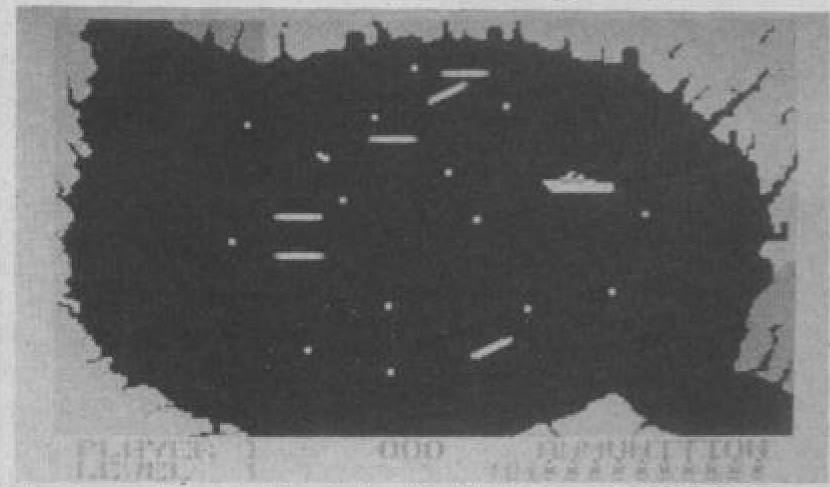
BEACH-HEAD

Producer: **U.S. Gold**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Spectrum version by Ocean**

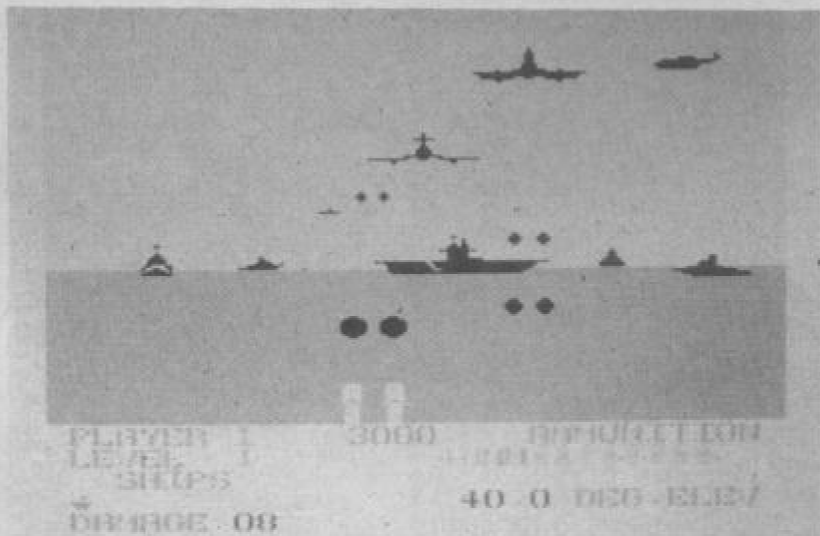
Beach-Head arrived in Britain from America with plenty of pre-publicity as one of those new generation US games that had to be seen. U.S. Gold are now busy bringing all sorts of famous games under licence like *Zaxxon* (already available for the CBM64 and hopefully soon for the Spectrum). The graphics of *Beach-Head* on the CBM64 were very good and many people wondered how good they could still be on the Spectrum. The result makes for a favourable comparison – there's hope for *Zaxxon* as well then!

Beach-Head is a six stage game based loosely on American experiences in some Pacific war, the Second World War judging by the aircraft type. Stage one is the map screen where you must move your cursor to the area you wish to attack. If you opt for the hidden passage you risk losing ships (lives) in sailing them through the mine ifested and torpedo-ridden narrows. On the other hand your entry into the inner bay protected by the enemy's fleet goes unnotices, so they have less time to scramble fighters and bombers against your forces. The second screen is seen from the deck of your landing craft with anti-aircraft guns at the base and the enemy carriers beyond. Bombers cross from left to right while fighter-bombers attack you. Too many direct hits and you'll lose a life. Following this is a screen where you must attempt to sink the enemy shipping – a carrier crosses your field of fire, while other ships fire back at you. Completing this takes you to the beach-head itself, where you control tanks as they advance up the dunes, avoiding enemy obstacles, the final battle is the breaching of the giant gun. Here again you are in control of artillery and the object is to shoot out several white blocks in the tower's base before the giant turret can swing round and blast you out of existence.

Scoring is a fairly complex business, well explained in the detailed inlay.



Torpedoes and mines block the way through the Hidden Passage in BEACH-HEAD.



The enemy fleet retaliate to your intrusion in a vain attempt to stop you gaining the shore. Nice graphics on the aeroplanes.

CRITICISM

● 'Do you suffer from those disgustingly horrible people so crudely cast as Commodore 64 owners saying how superior their machine is, saying that your beloved Spectrum isn't capable of producing excellent programs like Beach-Head? You do! Now all you have to do is turn around and beat the asterisks out of them, and while doing this you can tell them that your Spectrum has a version of *Beach-Head* that is every bit as good as the 64 version if not better. The graphics are excellent and are just as pleasing to the eye as the 64 version. The sound – well that is one area where the Spectrum falls down slightly, but even so, it's not bad. The menu options are excellent, catering for just about every joystick plus definable keys too. The game is very playable and certainly addictive. This will keep you happy for a long while. All in all an excellent program well worth the £7.95 and a sure winner. Can't wait for more US Gold games.'

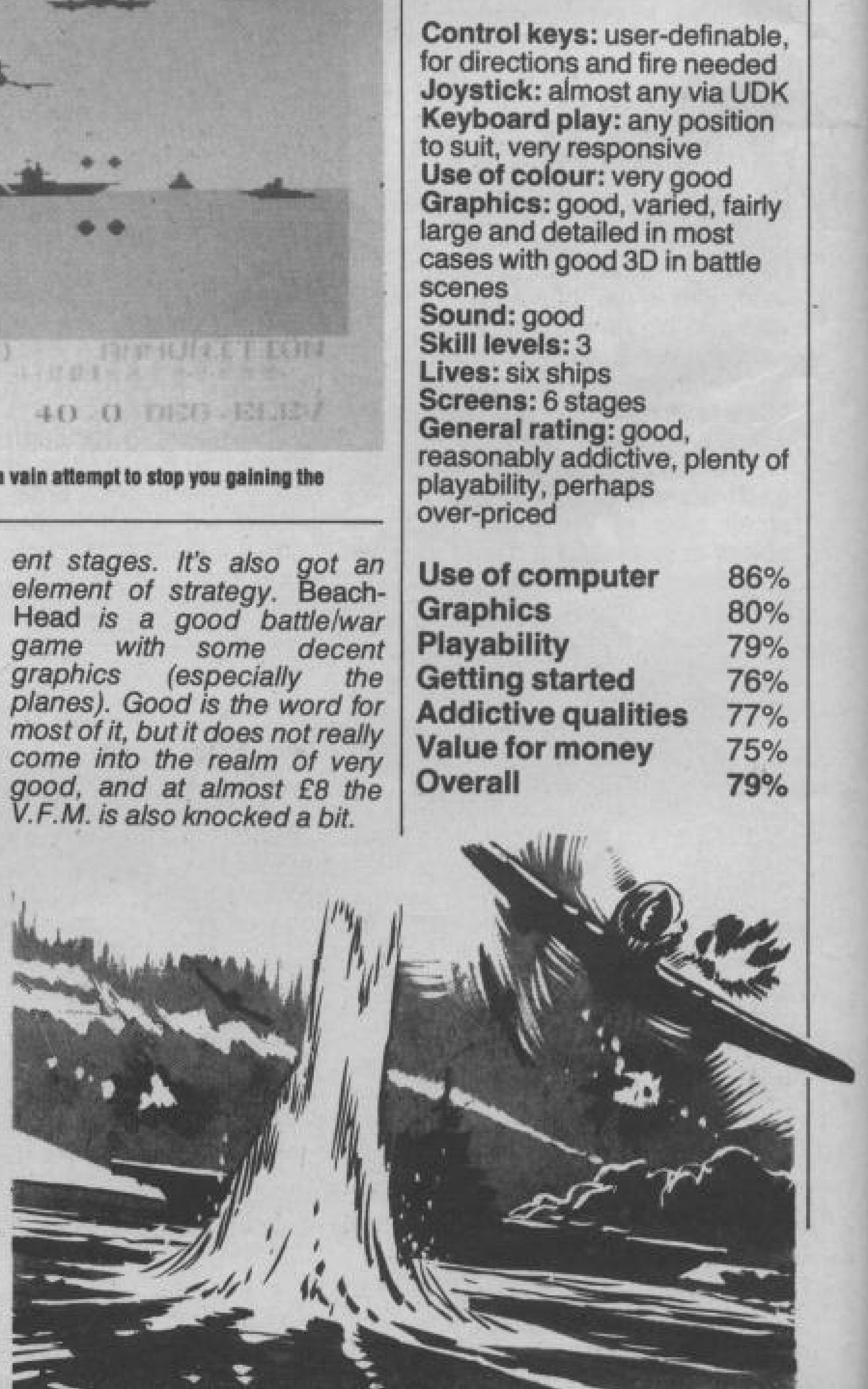
● *'This game has a fair mix of different game types in different stages. It's also got an element of strategy. Beach-Head is a good battle/war game with some decent graphics (especially the planes). Good is the word for most of it, but it does not really come into the realm of very good, and at almost £8 the V.F.M. is also knocked a bit.*

● 'Spectrum graphics have certainly come a long way since the venerable DK' Tronics game *3D Tanx* – and that wasn't bad. The effect of trajectory here is very strong and realistic. This is another translation from a 64 version although this version is far more difficult than its parent, possibly because US Gold well know that Spectrum gamers play a much meaner game than their 64 counterparts. The oddity of this game, though, is the mix of such excellent graphics (like on the General Quarters and Battle Stations screens) with relatively primitive looking ones (like in Hidden Passage and Beach Head). The explosions are a bit disappointing, just short red puffs – a bit unspectacular. Couldn't they at least have had a few bits falling off, or used alternate colours? Overall, rather mixed feelings. The game is fun to play and quite addictive, but coming from the States, perhaps a bit over-priced.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: user-definable, for directions and fire needed
Joystick: almost any via UDK
Keyboard play: any position to suit, very responsive
Use of colour: very good
Graphics: good, varied, fairly large and detailed in most cases with good 3D in battle scenes
Sound: good
Skill levels: 3
Lives: six ships
Screens: 6 stages
General rating: good, reasonably addictive, plenty of playability, perhaps over-priced

Use of computer	86%
Graphics	80%
Playability	79%
Getting started	76%
Addictive qualities	77%
Value for money	75%
Overall	**79%**



Peripheral perfection



No more fumbling with the game control keys, now you can have joystick control on the ZX Spectrum. The Kempston joystick interface allows all joysticks in the Kempston range (and others that are Atari compatible) to be used with the Spectrum. Simply plugs into the edge connector. No modifications necessary. **ONLY £11.50**



Compatible with ZX Interface 1 the Pro-Interface has three 9-way D Sockets. Two of the sockets allow compatibility with Sinclair/Psion software whilst the third offers the dual facility of both Kempston joystick software and cursor key software. The Pro-Interface also features a cartridge slot for ROM based software. **ONLY £19.95**



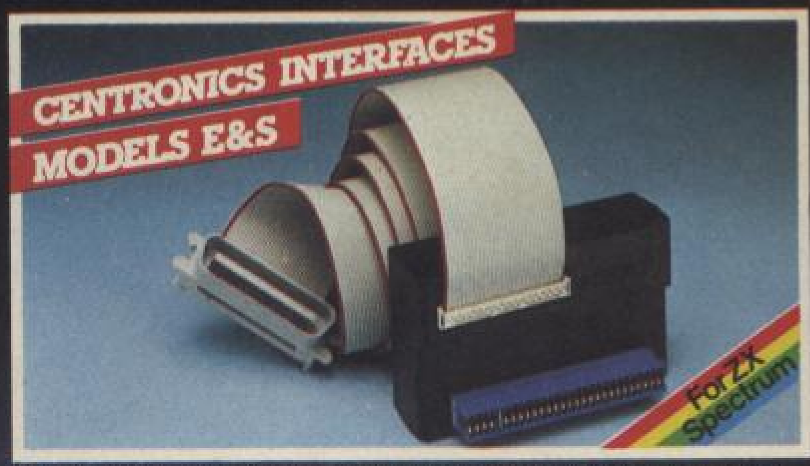
Maximum arcade quality features at a reasonable price. Features: □ Top fire button for one handed thumb control □ Trigger button for one handed index finger control □ Base fire bar for left or right handed control □ 8-way arcade quality leaf switches □ Rubber return action □ 1.5 metre cable. Commodore and Atari compatible. See joystick interface for Spectrum compatibility. **ONLY £12.75**



At last an RS 232 interface for the ZX Spectrum allowing connection to any printer which follows the RS 232 protocol. The interface has its own EPROM allowing the use of keywords LLIST, LPRINT and COPY. We recommend the Brother EP44 Printer for use with this interface. Interface complete with cable and connector **ONLY £45.00**



The ultimate joystick for the home computer. Features: □ Ergonomic design and nylon covered steel shaft □ 8-way arcade quality leaf switches □ Dual fire buttons for left or right handed play □ Rubber return action for smoothness □ 1.5 metre cable.
Commodore and Atari compatible. See joystick interface for Spectrum compatibility. **ONLY £13.50**



The Kempston centronics interface will allow you to utilise a vast range of printers with an industry standard centronics input port on the ZX Spectrum. **Interface E** has all operating commands held in an EPROM, so plug in and its ready to use. **ONLY £49.99** **Interface S** offering similar features as above but software routines are provided separately to initialise the interface before use. **ONLY £35.00**

KEMPSTON
MICRO ELECTRONICS LTD

Full details on all our products are available on request. S.A.E. please. Most products are available from WH Smith, Boots, Spectrum Computer Centres, good computer shops or direct. All prices include VAT and P & P. Please allow 21 days for delivery.

Kempston Micro Electronics Ltd., Singer Way,
Woburn Road Industrial Estate, Kempston, Bedford, MK42 7AF
Tel: (0234) 856633 Telex: 826078 KEMPMI G

Trade Enquiries Welcome

Seeing is

You'll see the difference from the moment you pick up one of the games from Firebird's new Silver Range.

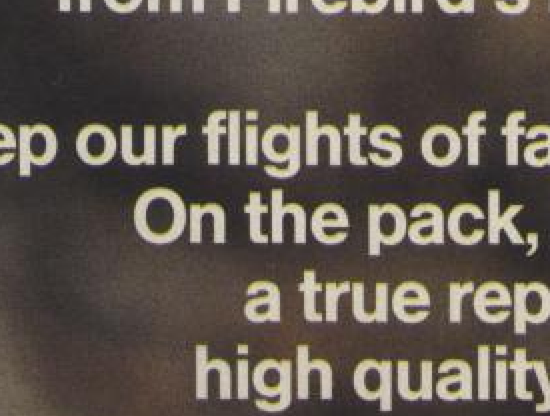
We keep our flights of fancy for the game. On the pack, you'll find there is a true representation of the high quality screen graphics.

Here's a sneak look at three of the NEW games:



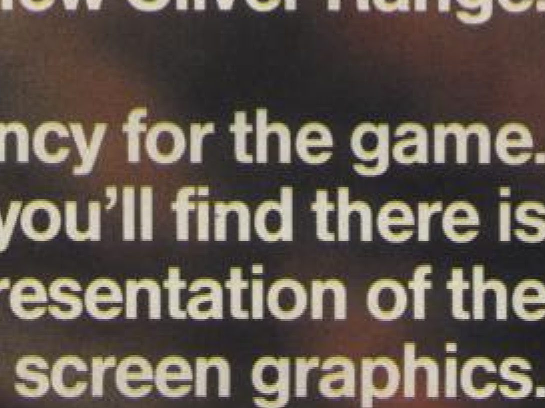
BOOTY

Well shiver me timbers and splice the mainbrace and pass the grog, me hearties. Here be the greatest pirate adventure of them all, aboard that scourge of the Seven Seas – the dreaded Black Galleon. Feast yer eyes on the BOOTY-ful treasure stored in 20 holds. There be pirates, parrots and fun galore. If you don't like it, matey, we'll hang you by the highest yard-arm!!!



THE WILD BUNCH

Blamed for a murder you did not commit, your only hope is to identify and capture the real killer – a member of the notorious gang, The Wild Bunch. But can you also survive life on the run in this adventure set in the Wild West…



BIRD STRIKE

Wing a plane to release a carrier pigeon…shoot the carrier pigeon and add a note to the stave at the top of the screen…shoot enough pigeons to complete the tune (without getting wiped out by the relentless, pursuing planes)…next wave.

Look out for these games in the FIREBIRD silver range at selected high street stores.

SPECTRUM: THE WILD BUNCH · BOOTY · MR. FREEZE · TERRA FORCE · VIKING RAIDERS · MENACE · BYTE BITTEN · EXODUS · RUN BABY RUN ·
COMMODORE 64: BOOTY · MR. FREEZE · EXODUS · HEADACHE · ZULU ·
VIC 20: SNAKE BITE · MICKEY THE BRICKY ·
BBC MICRO B: BIRD STRIKE · GOLD DIGGER · ACID DROPS · DUCK!

believing

There are twenty games now available from Firebird, and that's just the beginning. All the software is produced to the same high professional standards and all are available at the remarkably low price of

£2.50

FIREBIRD

SOFTWARE

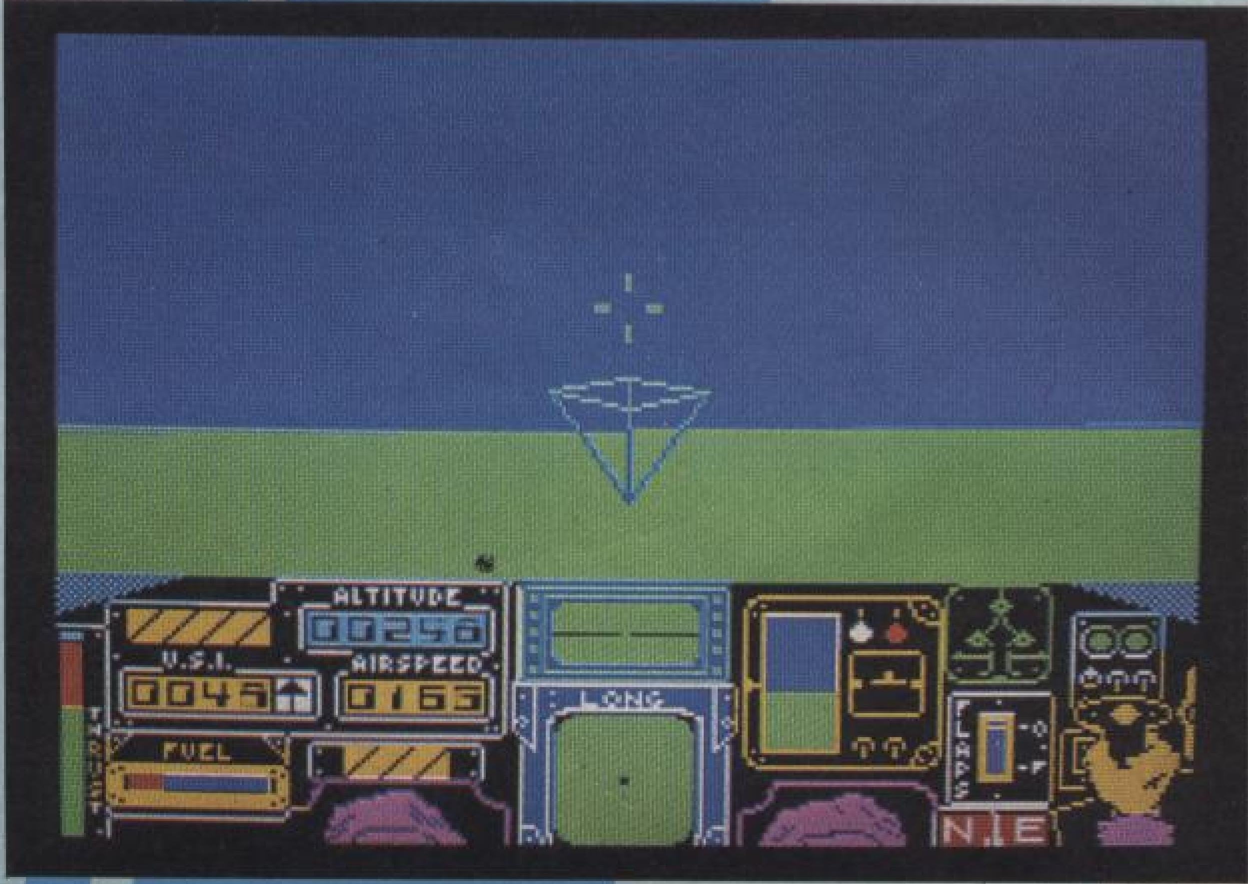
The new range from British Telecom. **You'd better believe it!!!**

FIREBIRD SOFTWARE, WELLINGTON HOUSE, UPPER ST. MARTIN'S LANE, LONDON WC2 9DL. TEL: 01-379 6755/5626

Firebird and the Firebird logo are trademarks of British Telecommunications plc.

A Crash Smash

D·E·L·T·A W·I·N·G



Taking off from a base

DELTA WING

Producer: **Creative Sparks**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price : **£6.95**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Graham Johns**

Delta Wing is a battle flight simulation, but unlike Digital Integration's *Fighter Pilot*, your aircraft is a make believe one – a very high performance one at that. Creative Sparks have also created a game for two players with two computers and monitors for a very realistic fight. But the game is also playable with one player against the computer. The game includes various skill levels and provides numerous friendly and enemy bases as well as enemy fighters to battle with.

There are four skill levels – trainer, novice, pilot and ace. On the simplest level the enemy aircraft do not move, and on the other levels the player may select the number of enemy bases to be attacked – one bomb is allowed for each base.

Delta Wing has a double display – instruments plus map and instruments plus windscreen view. The instrument panel is very detailed including meters for altitude, vertical speed (most useful in landing), brake indicator (for use on the ground or in the air), thrust, fuel, airspeed, artificial horizon, flaps and undercarriage (up or down). For attack purposes there are also the vertical position locator (VPL) and radar. A compass is also supplied for general direction in conjunction with the map. The VPL shows the height of enemy aircraft relative to your height. The radar has a long and short range scan.

In addition to the instruments, the graphic display also shows the pilots knee and hand on the joystick. The view through the cockpit window shows sky and ground relative to attitude and all movements are reflected in the instrument panel's artificial horizon which shows pitch angle and roll angle. Once in visual range, enemy bases and aircraft appear as wire frame objects moving fully in 3D. Your own bases are similar, but a different configuration of lines.

Similar representations appear on the map together with your present position and that of enemy bombers etc.

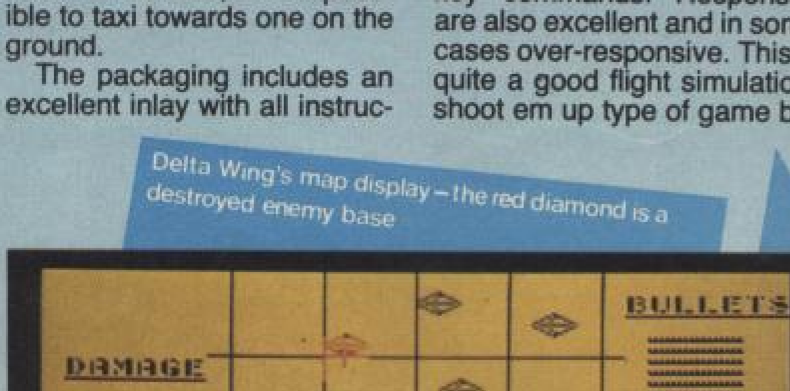
Refuelling and re-arming require landing near a friendly base. Although there are no runways in the game, landing must be carried out fully. Landing too far away from a base need not be fatal, as it is possible to taxi towards one on the ground.

The packaging includes an excellent inlay with all instructions very simply laid out and with colour diagrams showing instrumentation and map display information.

CRITICISM

● '*Delta Wing* is like *Fighter Pilot* but it takes *Fighter Pilot* further so that bases which you can bomb are included. The screen layout is excellent and you can actually see the pilots legs and arm reacting to your key commands. Responses are also excellent and in some cases over-responsive. This is quite a good flight simulation/shoot em up type of game but the graphics of the enemy planes and bases are not that good. I still think *Fighter Pilot* is better but this is still a good game. The sound and menu options are fine and the bonus for friends with interface one of a two-handed game means they can play against each other. All in all another good game from Creative Sparks.'

Delta Wing's map display – the red diamond is a destroyed enemy base



● *'This game must be compared to the highly successful* Fighter Pilot, *although compared against* FP *it is by no means as difficult to play or enjoy. Control layout is totally realistic and highly informative even though this is not actually a real plane. As you control the plane, everything is instantly on the move, pilot's hands and knees move in accordance with your joystick, the instruments all react spontaneously – in this sense it is utterly perfect and in my opinion – unbeatable. Enemy bases and aircraft are all wire drawn for graphic speed, but this doesn't spoil any playability of the game whatsoever. Colour has been realistically used and especially on the instrument panel very impressively used. The graphics are very fast and very realistic. This is the most playable and enjoyable flight shoot em up that I've seen, although, saying that, it is detailed enough to be a simulation as well. I recommend it!'*

● 'It's unavoidable to compare *Delta Wing* with *Fighter Pilot*, but *Delta Wing* isn't out to out-fly *Fighter Pilot*, because this is more of a shoot em up game than a simulation in the sense that *FP* was. For starters *Delta Wing* is not a real plane, and its manoeuverability would probably rip the wings off most present day fighters. Sailing along at a comfortable height of 65,000 feet doing almost 2,000 knots is fun in itself, especially as at that speed you can see the symbol of your aircraft on the map moving quie clearly. But to nose dive from that height on an enemy base, see it appear as a small dot in the field of green, grow into a shape, and then pull out at the last second to whizz right over the top of it and bomb it is almost heaven! The various skill levels have been well chosen from the simplest right up to the ace level where the enemy fighters are no easy match. The controllability of *Delta Wing* is such, however, that you can really dog fight with the computer, slamming on your air breaks and rolling to get the enemy in front of your sights again. Because of this, the amazing graphics, their neatness ans responsiveness, *Delta Wing* is the most like flying I've ever seen on a computer. It is huge fun, and absolute must!'

COMMENTS

Control keys: I/P left/right, W/Z up/down, N to fire. Additionally there are 10 function controls
Joystick: Sinclair, Kempston, Fuller, AGF, Protek
Keyboard play: extremely responsive
Use of colour: excellent
Graphics: excellent, fast detailed very good wire frame 3D
Sound: good tunes, not much during game for speed of graphics
Skill levels: 4 with 5 sub levels
Lives: 3
Screens: 2
Special features: 2-player game networked via Interface 1
General rating: excellent.

Use of computer	85%
Graphics	94%
Playability	94%
Getting started	90%
Addictive qualities	89%
Value for money	87%
Overall	**90%**

TRON

Producer: **Blaby Computer Games**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **J. Woodcock**



Blaby's *Tron* is nothing new in computer games, except that it's one of the first 'Light Cycle' type games at the budget price. The traditional rules apply, with the player being unable to hit the edge of the playing area, his own light trail or that of the other player (or computer). The one-player game against the computer does have the novelty of removing the edge of screen penalty and opening the playing area up with a vertical and horizontal wrap around screen. In the two-player mode the screen edges are reinstated but eight directional movement is permitted.

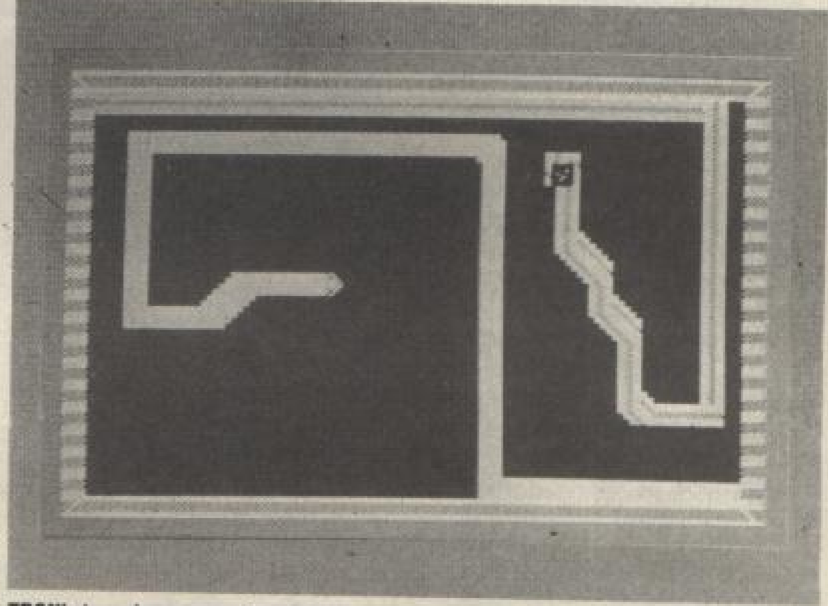
CRITICISM

● 'Being one of the earliest type of games that came out for the Spectrum, *Tron* isn't very inspiring – just trying to outwit the computer, which isn't very intelligent in this case anyway. The attitude towards the game changes completely when you go into the two-player mode. It instantly becomes more fun trying to outwit your opponent. Also, further difficulties are imposed in the two-player mode, like the disappearance of the wrap around screen. Graphics move by the block when playing against the computer although they instantly change to smooth movement when in the two-player mode. Quite a colourful game, but you can't expect much in any case. Fairly good value if you've got someone else to play with.'

● *'Any criticism of a game like this is very dependent on whether the reviewer likes the game type. I do, although it is an old and very simple type of game. This version is well up to scratch, especially in the two-player mode, which is the best way to play the type anyway. The computer doesn't seem to be very clever as an opponent, and in the one-player mode the game soon palls, although the wrap around screen adds some novelty. If you want a 'Light Cycle' type game and have always considered them too expensive for what you get, well now's the time.'*

COMMENTS

Control keys: Q/A up/down, Z/X left/right (left player 1), P/L up/down, N/M left/right (right player 2)
Joystick: none



TRON's two-player game has eight directional movement.

Keyboard play: responsive enough for the game, better in 2-player with reasonably laid out keys
Use of colour: for the type of game, very imaginative
Graphics: very simple, although there are cars at the front and wide trails for ease of seeing, this does tend to limit the playing space more.
Sound: not much
Skill levels: 1
Lives: 1
Special features: 1 or 2-player games
General rating: nothing new, but a fairly good version of an old game, and at its new price, very good value

Use of computer	63%
Graphics	48%
Playability	52%
Getting started	52%
Addictive qualities	49%
Value for money	68%
Overall	**55%**

PSYTRAXX

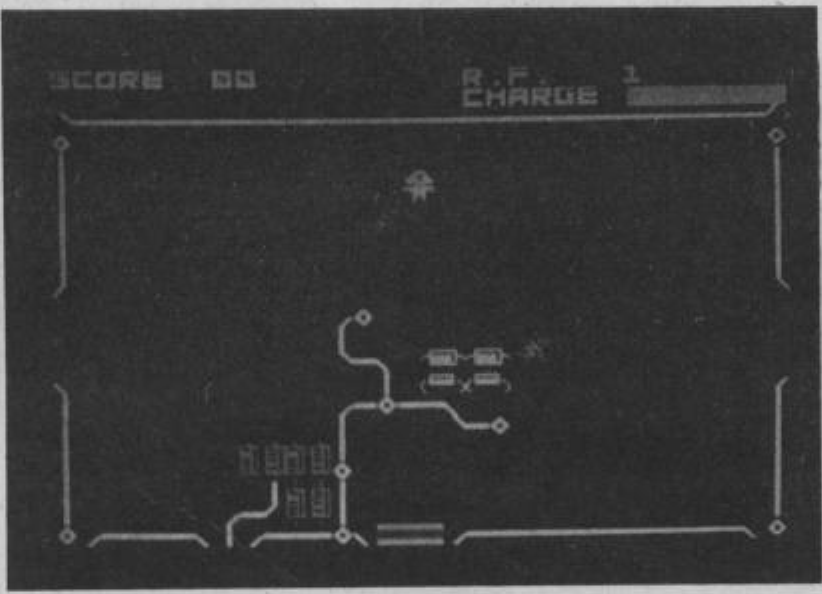
Producer: **The Edge**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£6.95**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Andrew Beale**



Psytraxx is said by its producers to be the second true mega-game, the first having been their 64 game *Quo Vadis*? "Now Spectrum owners can experience the fruits of our unbelievable synergy programming techniques," says the PR. No one at CRASH is entirely sure just what 'synergy' is when it's at home, or how it makes *Psytraxx* different from any other similar game type; and in as much as *Starbike* looks uncannily like *Lunar Jetman*, *Psytraxx* looks uncannily like *Atic Atac*. You have a very large number of rooms, a wandering and questing hero and numerous manifestations of

monsters, plus useful items to pick up on the way. As in *Atic Atac*, it it up to the player to discover how to do what, and what to do with it when you've got it.

Psytraxx takes place inside that ever popular location, a computer. You are in control of a Microdroid and the object is to do battle with the nuts and bolts of its innards (diodes, chips and the like) while trying to gain access to a CPU by collecting the Key Cards. To keep your spirits up there are little green blocks in each room visited that charge you up so you can fire at and destroy the nasties, although in each life, once eaten the cake is gone. There are only five rooms (all framed in printed circuitry) at the start that you can visit without problem since the last is blocked off by a purple and a blue force field over two exit doors. Collecting the key card a few rooms before, however, will gain you access to the next area which is much larger. The Edge claim that there are over 1000 screens to play through, and as our reviewers discovered, the game isn't as straightforward as it first seems.



A thousand plus rooms of connections and materialisations in PSYTRAXX.

CRITICISM

● *'Psytraxx* is definitely an *Atic Atac* look-alike, a sort of arcade adventure in which you must obviously find out how all the various elements are linked in order to see a way through. It's a constant fight against the nasties and a battle to keep the energy up as contact with any of the fixtures in the rooms drains you rapidly, and once that's gone you have no defence against the diodes and resistors until another power pack is found. Each of the key cards found seems to alow you access to further parts of the complex, but there are puzzles too. What is the chip with QR on it? Touch it and you dissolve to be reformed, but the chip that was yellow is now white and all the rooms that were once white are now yellow. Repeating the process reverses the phenomenon. Is it useful? This and many other questions will now doubt be answered in the forthcoming weeks! I found *Psytraxx* extremely playable and challenging. It's obviously a much larger game than *Atic Atac*, but the graphics are nowhere near as attractive and as far as I can determine at this state of play, there isn't actually as much to do either. Still, a worthwhile buy, and I'll give it the benefit of the doubt that the further in you get the more complicated play becomes, just as it did with the first three levels.'

● *This game from The Edge is similar in general game idea to* Atic Atac *(but not as good by far). Generally the game is okay, with all the nasties (chips, diodes etc) looking quite good. But on my encounter I would hardly call it a mega-game; in fact it was a bit on the synergy side.'*

● 'I know hype is important when it comes to grabbing attention, but I think The Edge have well and truly overdone it with *Psytraxx*. I'm not saying that it isn't an interesting game, but if this is a *true mega-game* then I haven't much hope left for Spectrum advances. Let's face it, with all the nonsense about "synergy" programming techniques, what we have here is a pale shadow of *Atic Atac*, but completely without the charm of that game. I was vaguely reminded as well of Softek's *Microbot*, which I thought was a much better game that *Psytraxx*. The graphics here aren't bad, the animation of the various enemies is reasonable but the 1000 plus rooms are pretty boring to look at. I guess this is another "map" game, as you can quickly become lost in the maze, but an important part is such games is that the locations should all have something to give them identity. *Psytraxx* lacks sadly in this respect. Because of this, I didn't find it particularly addictive.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: A/Z up/down, O/P left/right, Q-T pick up and drop
Joystick: Kempston, Sinclair, AGF, Protek
Keyboard play: responsive 8-directional movement
Use of colour: above average
Graphics: reasonable size and detail, fast and fairly smooth
Sound: useful beeps and some effects, otherwise not much
Skill levels: 1
Lives: 3
Screens: over a 1000
General rating: a large-sized game which was generally felt to be above average to good, but over-priced

Use of computer	75%
Graphics	71%
Playability	73%
Getting started	70%
Addictive qualities	59%
Value for money	64%
Overall	**69%**

GUIDO

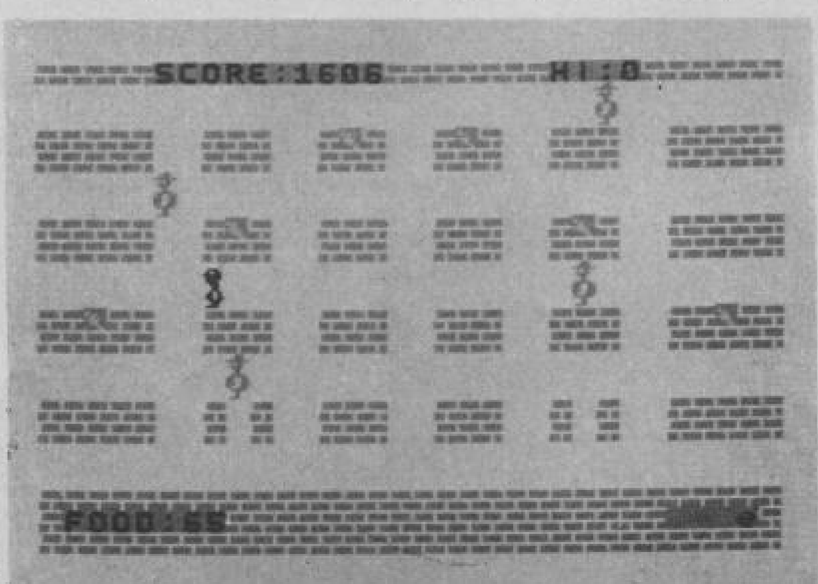
Producer: **Blaby Computer Games**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Derek Lawrie**

Guido is a small black ravenous, carrot eating rabbit, who's sole aim in life is to eat – well carrots. Here's what you do. The screen lights up with a series of brick blocks arranged in a four high by six wide grid above a base platform. On several of the brick platforms there are carrots embedded in the platform. By jumping up on the carrot-bearing block and bouncing, Guido not only eats the carrot but also drills right through to fall down onto the block beneath.

Life would, of course, be the same if it were this simple, and it isn't. There are bouncing balls, irate farmers and android hares to watch out for. The bouncing balls on screen one sail up and down the vertical gaps between the blocks, whereas the farmers walk along the horizontal ones. What with watching out for these hazards and having to pick his way carefully around in order to get to the right blocks, life can get a bit fraught, especially as by screen three you have vertical balls and horizontal farmers all at the same time. Never mind, Bright eyes.

CRITICISM

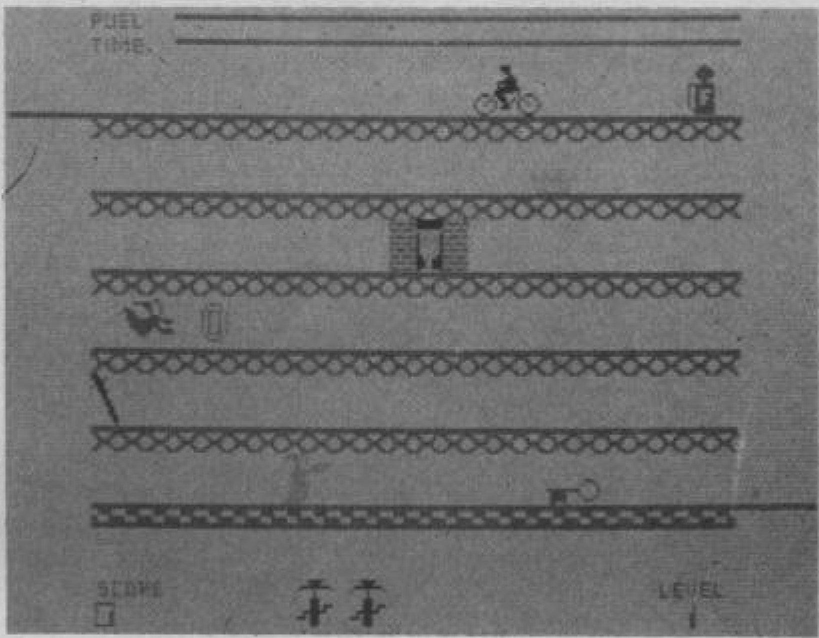
● 'I would hardly call this game easy, in fact I'd go to great lengths to say that it's very difficult, especially on the third screen with balls whizzing up and down and farmers moving left to right. The idea behind the game is very simple, just collect the carrots but it still manages to be very entertaining. Graphics are simple but





GHOST RIDER

Producer: **Positive Image**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Tom Canavan**



The Game, says the inlay, is to collect the golden cup from each screen. The cups are locked away so a key is needed. Other objects can be collected as well. *Ghost Rider* is a platform game in which you star as a biker with pedal power. There are six levels connected by fast rising and descending lifts at either end of the platforms. The main difficulty is timing to get on or off the lifts, and in avoiding the various hazards that float around on the levels protecting to collectible objects. A problem is that objects on each screen have to be collected in the right order and it isn't possible to ride a lift all the way round. Collecting the key results in the vaults containing the golden cup vanishing to leave the cup free for collection.

Completing the first screen moves you onto the second, more difficult arrangement. here holes have appeared in the platforms making the route more torturous. Each screen is played against a time limit and a fuel limit, and there is a petrol pump somewhere to top up, although why a pedal bike requires petrol is open to speculation! In all there are twelve levels.



CRITICISM

● '100% machine code... real arcade action combined with strategy and adventure... a game for quick hand and nimble fingers... We've all heard that before, haven't we? Is it 100% m/c all the time in this case, I ask myself. This game is extremely similar in layout to *Morris and the Bikers* except that here you are pedalling. The graphics are okay but not ultra-smooth as they are moved by character squares. I would not agree with the word 'adventure' at all, but 'strategy' – yes. One must think ahead to use the lifts to advantage. As for quick hands etc, all arcaders have these virtues! Overall the strategy element (or thinking ahead) does give it a slight addictive boost.

● *'At first, it seems to me to be a very simple game, a very simple idea, but after playing it for a bit I discovered that there is a bit more to it than simply collecting objects, you need to collect them in the right order. Quick reactions are pretty essential as the graphic characters move by the block and can take you by surprise. Screens do vary but stay on similar platform lines. Colour has been used fairly well but it does lack something in both graphic and colour presentation. Overall, it turns out as a rather average game that may well appeal to the younger arcade player.'*

● 'Ghost Rider is a follow up program to Positive Image's *Bewarehouse*. I preferred the earlier one. Because of the character movement there is a tendency for the program to be over-finicky, especially when getting on or off a lift exit. I don't know why, but colour characters on a white background such as we have here, always look a bit unsatisfying, and the presentation would have looked better if another colour had been used. Overall, a good idea which still seems to lack something in the playing.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: Z/X left/right
Joystick: hardly needs it
Keyboard play: simple keys and reasonable responses
Use of colour: varied use, spoilt by use of white background
Graphics: imaginative and varied, not all that smooth
Sound: pedal noises and other occasional beeps
Skill levels: 1 with progressive difficulty
Lives: 3
Screens: 12
General rating: above average idea with medium playability, may appeal more to younger players.

Use of computer	69%
Graphics	57%
Playability	55%
Getting started	58%
Addictive qualities	66%
Value for money	55%
Overall	**60%**



quite pleasing and fast – enough! Colour and sound are used quite well, although the colour could have been a little more contrasty. Pretty good value for its price and should provide quite a few hours entertainment – and is very difficult.'

● 'Guido *isn't going to win any prizes for content as it is a very simple idea. The real effort has gone into adjusting the timing of the various nasties so that the player is presented with a game that is extremely hard and frustrating in the addictive sense of the word. Simple, quite compelling to play and likely to appeal to nimble fingered kids, and serious arcaders alike (in spare moments between the grown up stuff of Combat Lynx).'*

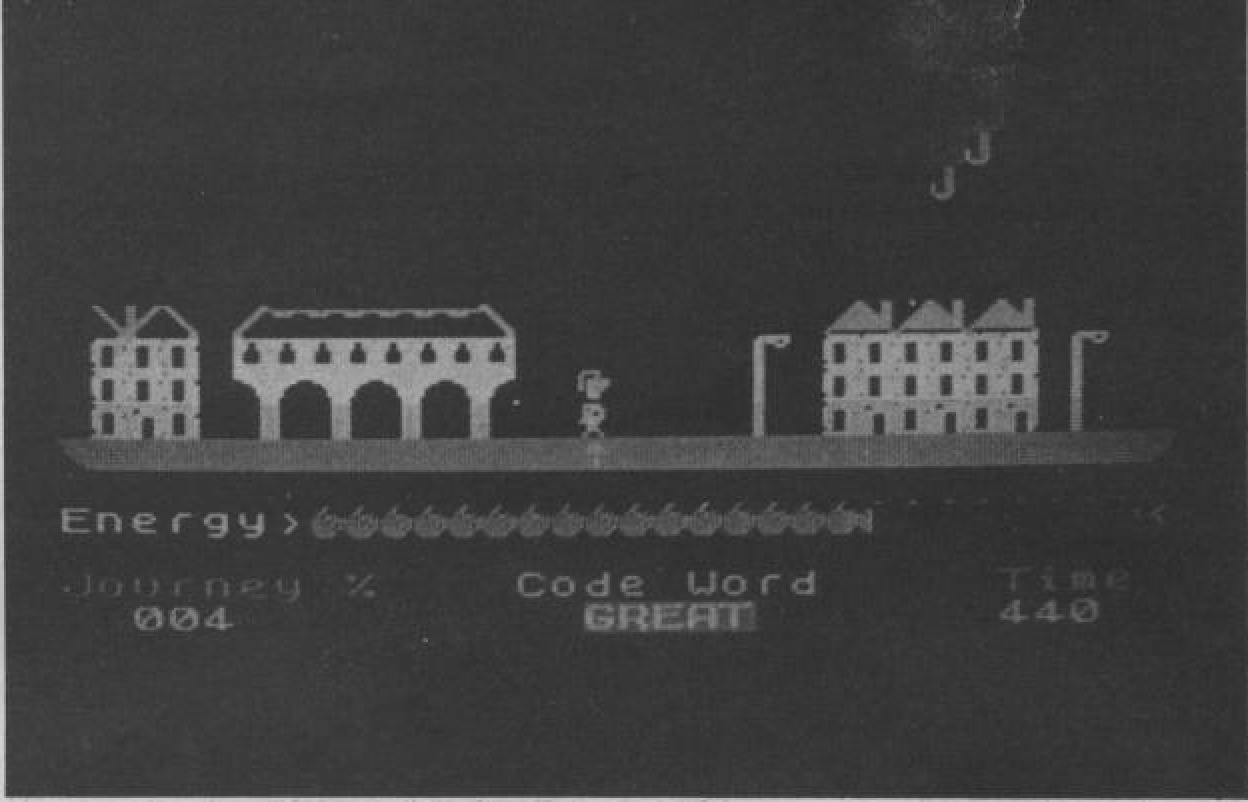
COMMENTS

Control keys: Z/X left/right, J to jump, N to dig
Joystick: Kempston, but hardly needed
Keyboard: responsive
Use of colour: quite good
Graphics: reasonably sized, not over much animation although the bouncing balls work very well
Skill levels: 3
Lives: 3
General rating: average in game type but represents very good value and the game is quite addictive.

Use of computer	62%
Graphics	49%
Playability	53%
Getting started	54%
Addictive qualities	52%
Value for money	63%
Overall	**56%**

SUPER MUTT

Producer: **Silversoft**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£5.95**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Steve Beresford**



SUPER MUTT waits for the bad weather to pass before taking off again on the hunt for code letters.

Being a story of Heroism and unparalleled Daring, marvellous Hunts and incredible Adventures amongst savage Saurians, giant Fish, monstrous Behemoths and strange and curious Tribes. Well that's how Silversoft put it anyway.

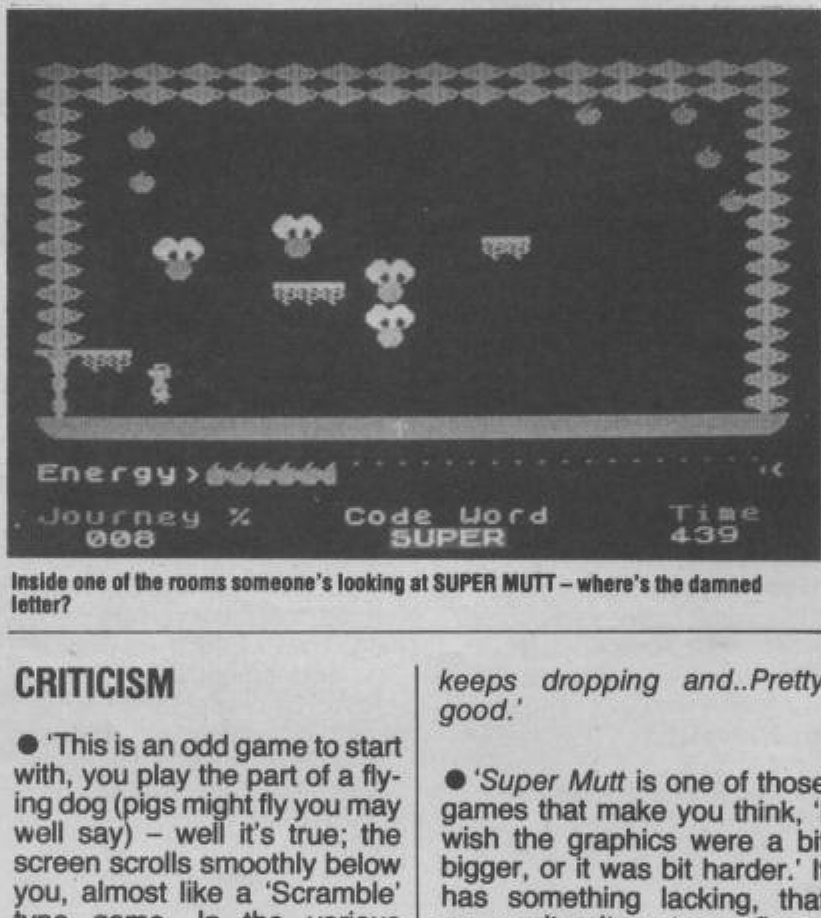
Supermut is engaged in a quest to find his friend, The Pup, who is held captive in the Castle at the End of Memory. In order to be able to penetrate its defences, Super Mutt must enter various rooms in buildings en route to collect pieces of the code word shown at the bottom of the screen, and without this, he will not be able to enter the castle.

Some 64 landscapes and 24 rooms make up this new game, which takes the form of a scrolling landscape of trees and buildings over which Super Mutt flies. Some of the buildings below him contain rooms which may be entered, and in these single letters which may or may not make up the code word shown at the bottom of the screen, can be found flitting around. There are also numerous monsters flitting around inside too.

Since Super Mutt is super enough to fly but not to fly backwards, care must be takén to ensure visiting everywhere so as not to miss out on a chance at a code word letter. Entering a building is done simply enough by landing next to it, taking care not to land on a tree or roof, and then walking in through the door. Inside the rooms there are several platforms which can be used for leaping upwards. This is neccessary both to collect the flitting letter, and to collect the green and red apples which keep the Mutt in business. Contact with some (but not all) of the monsters will deplete his apple store rapidly. Nevertheless, some of the monsters are very useful as additional stepping stones to fame and fortune, not to mention apples and letters. A letter gained in a code word results in the letter no longer flashing at the base of the screen.

If you manage to collect all the letters in a code word, Super Mutt finds himself at the Castle, indeed in the dungeon, possessed of an array of keys. But which opens the cell door – anyway, which cell door is it? One contains the Pup, the other a rather ferocious wolf...

The only other thing to add is that while flying, Super Mutt must avoid the multifarious objects that come whizzing along, like umbrellas and purple things that look like the object Jet Set Willy ended up in...



Inside one of the rooms someone's looking at SUPER MUTT – where's the damned letter?

CRITICISM

● 'This is an odd game to start with, you play the part of a flying dog (pigs might fly you may well say) – well it's true; the screen scrolls smoothly below you, almost like a 'Scramble' type game. In the various rooms well detailed and animated aliens try to prevent you from collecting apples or letters. The graphics are detailed, colourful but maybe a tiny bit too small. Overall a very playable, long lasting game with plenty of content.'

● 'Super Mutt *is not exactly as straighforward as it first seems. In the many rooms aliens may be a danger, a hindrance or a help, and often a mixture of these things. The result is a highly entertaining and original game with some very attractive looking graphics which I found fairly addictive and which gave me a lot to do. It's one of those games that leads to terminal frustration when you're almost there, one more letter to get and then a whole run of rooms are useless to you and the energy keeps dropping and..Pretty good.'*

● '*Super Mutt* is one of those games that make you think, 'I wish the graphics were a bit bigger, or it was bit harder.' It has something lacking, that you can't quite put your finger on. Otherwise it is a very playable game which is certainly worth buying. Although a bit on the small side the graphics are very neat and well animated. Flying the Mutt takes a lot of co-ordination to get him high enough to miss the buildings and trees but low enough to miss the flying storks, umbrellas and underpants(!!!) I quite enjoyed playing this game although I thought the end was bit of an anti-climax after all the effort.'

COMMENTS

Control Keys: Z/X left/right (walking) P to fly and L to leap inside rooms
Joystick: hardly needed
Keyboard play: very reponsive, with an amazing leap potential
Use of colour: very good and varied
Graphics: smallish in the main, but detailed, well animated and imaginative
Sound: average
Skill levels: 1
Lives: 1
Screens: scrolling plus 24 rooms
General rating: very good to excellent



Use of computer	78%
Graphics	82%
Playability	86%
Getting started	83%
Additctive qualities	85%
Value for money	83%
Overall	**83%**

CRASH
MICRO GAMES ACTION

T-shirts & Binders Offer



Great T-shirts in high-quality 100% cotton with double stitching on neck and shoulder seams for lasting wear. Three sizes, in black with a brill **CRASH** design in three colours.

£4.50 incl p&p

Fab **Sweatshirts** are long-sleeved, heavy quality and fleecy lined with double stitching on neck and shoulder seams for durability. Colourfast, machine washable navy blue with **CRASH** design in three colours. Three sizes.

£8.95 incl p&p

Chest sizes: (**S**)mall, 34in-36in
(**M**)edium, 38in
(**L**)arge, 40in

Our fat binder doesn't just look impressive with its silver blocked **CRASH** logo and dark blue finish, it's also strong enough to hold a year's supply of **CRASH** away from your friends! And it's **only £4.50** including postage and VAT!

Build yourself the most comprehensive manual on Spectrum software ever seen! Save your issues of CRASH month by month, and turn them into the hard cover with the fattening soft centre!

FREE IN-DEPTH INDEX!

As **Lloyd Mangram** mentioned in his letters page, he's been told to get it together (we've generously provided him with a second tiny desk) and organise an Index for the 12 issues your binder will hold. The index is **absolutely FREE** to anyone who orders the binder and will be sent automatically in January.

So make sure you turn your issues into the **CRASH Spectrum Software Encyclopaedia!**

Be a Superior Alien with your very own CRASH T-shirt and sweatshirt!

Please send me ....**CRASH T-shirts** @ £4.50 **S**☐ **M**☐ **L**☐

..............**Sweatshirt** @ £8.95 **S**☐ **M**☐ **L**☐

Please send.........**CRASH** Binder(s) at **£4.50**

(overseas orders please add 40p).

Name:..

Address:..

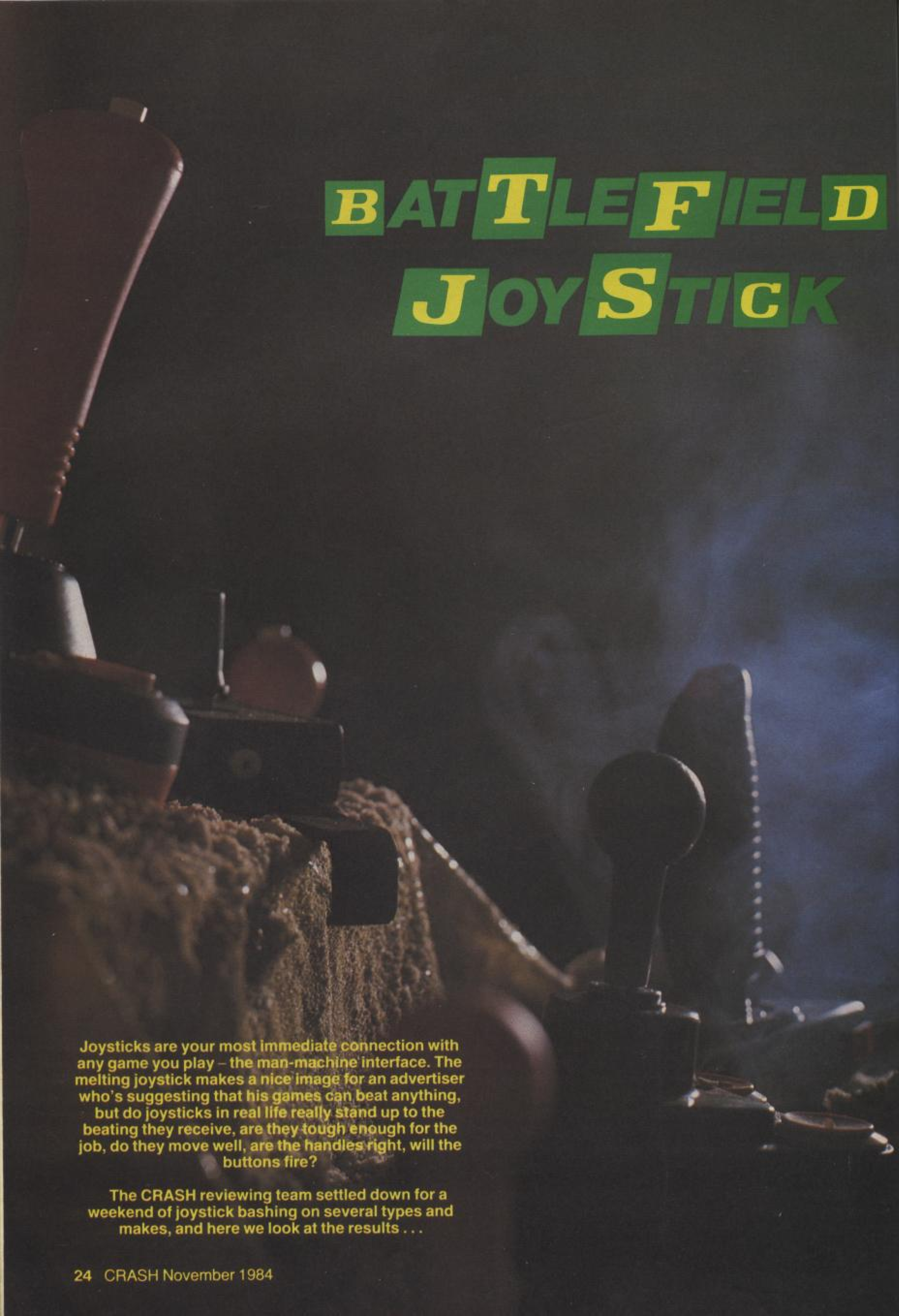
....

....

I enclose Cheque/PO payable to CRASH MICRO £..............

Please allow 28 days for delivery

CRASH MICRO, Freepost, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1BR



BATTLEFIELD JOYSTICK

Joysticks are your most immediate connection with any game you play – the man-machine interface. The melting joystick makes a nice image for an advertiser who's suggesting that his games can beat anything, but do joysticks in real life really stand up to the beating they receive, are they tough enough for the job, do they move well, are the handles right, will the buttons fire?

The CRASH reviewing team settled down for a weekend of joystick bashing on several types and makes, and here we look at the results . . .



THERE ARE NOW many makes of joystick available, and almost as many types as there are makes. Each boasts design innovations so that it is better than all the others – and they come in a range of prices too. We all know that joysticks on arcade machines take a battering, so too do those at home. Do they stand up? We tested 19 joysticks from well known manufacturers to see how they all compared.

A joystick must be able to withstand games that require fast and repeated movement, so what better than Ocean's Daley Thompson's Decathlon? We used the Commodore version of the game because it is more violent than the Spectrum! But it isn't only toughness; joysticks must also be capable of fine and positive movement, comfortable to use with sensible fire buttons. Several arcade skill games were used to test four major points for both the stick action and the fire button action.

TRAVEL means the maximum movement between opposite poles (e.g. up/down) on the stick, and how far the fire button had to be depressed. On stick action over 1½ inches was considered to be very long. Oddly, some of the short sticks had longer to travel than the taller sticks.

ACTION FORCE means the amount of hand or finger pressure required to keep the stick pressed over or the fire button down.

REACTION SPEED indicates how fast contact is made, how quickly the action affects the game, and how well rapid movements can be made (especially rapid fire buttons).

RESPONSE/FEEDBACK indicates how positive the stick or fire action feels and whether there is any physical or audible feedback to tell the player that contact has been made.

ERGONOMICS how useful is the stick for hand held playing, and how well does it operate on a table top. Is the stick well designed for comfort, ease of fire action and general stability.

After preliminary testing, the joysticks all went through ten minutes of the Decathlon to see how long they were likely to stand up to use. During this test, some joysticks broke. . .

Finally, all the sticks have 9 pin D connectors and are Atari compatible on the pin outs. They all need an interface of one sort or another to work with the Spectrum (except the clip-ons). Some offer 2 independent fire actions, but these only work with either a **Cambridge** interface or the programmable **Comcon** from Frel Ltd., which was the interface used for this test.

Each joystick review is split into two halves; firstly a brief technical breakdown; secondly the review team's report.

PRO ACE



Supplier: Sumlock Microware, 198 Deansgate, Manchester M3 3NE, Tel. (061) 834 4233

Price: £12.95

Lever Action: Strong plastic handle suspended between two plastic bushes. Central copper star acting as self-centering spring and contacting 4 copper rivets.

Fire Action: Oblong fire button at 12 o'clock operating copper contact switch. Trigger button at tip of stick activates copper plate contact.

Ergonomics: Average size easy grip enclosure for handheld operation. Rubber feet for table operation. Left and righthanders welcome.

Lead: Plastic moulded D connector and retaining grommet.

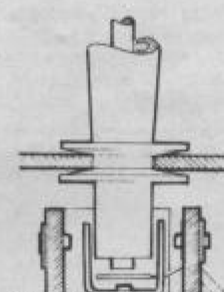
Weak point: Copper contact star can weaken and deform. Soft copper contact surface creates dust and can oxidise if not used over long period.

Stick Action
Travel: long.
Action force: very hard.
Reaction speed: slow.
Response/feedback: very poor and irregular – up/down was not too bad but left/right was terrible, and a lot of slack.

Fire Action
Travel: long on stick button, very long on base button.
Action force: medium.
Reaction speed: poor
Response/feedback: poor, no indication or 'feel', rather rubbery.

Ergonomics: the shaped base fits the hand well with a well positioned left or right hand base fire button, but very unstable on a table top, especially with the sticky travel. The long thin stick is quite comfortable to hold.

Life expectancy: top fire button pulls out too easily, the copper contacts bend out of shape easily with use,



causing erratic response. The general stick response and travel means that the handle will take a beating on hard, fast games.

SPECTRUM MECHANICAL

Supplier: EEC Ltd., 1 Whitehouse Close, Chalfont St. Peter, Bucks SL9 ODA, Tel. (0753) 885401

Price: £9.95

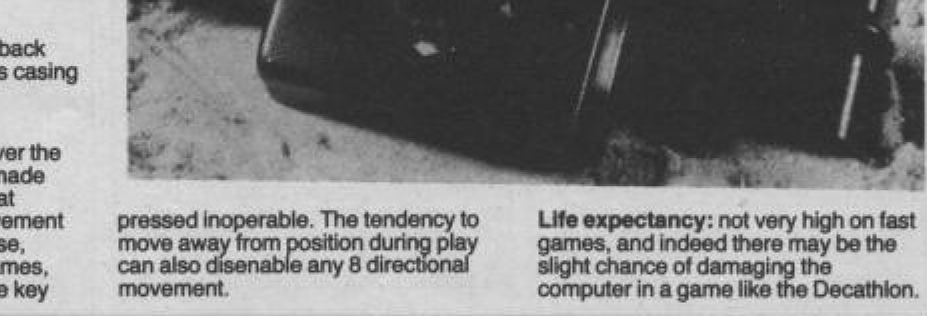
Lever Action: Plastic shaft strengthened by long selftapping screw suspended in rubber mount activates via cam plate four flexible key actuating fingers.

Fire Action: None

Fixing: Integrally moulded clip on grips.

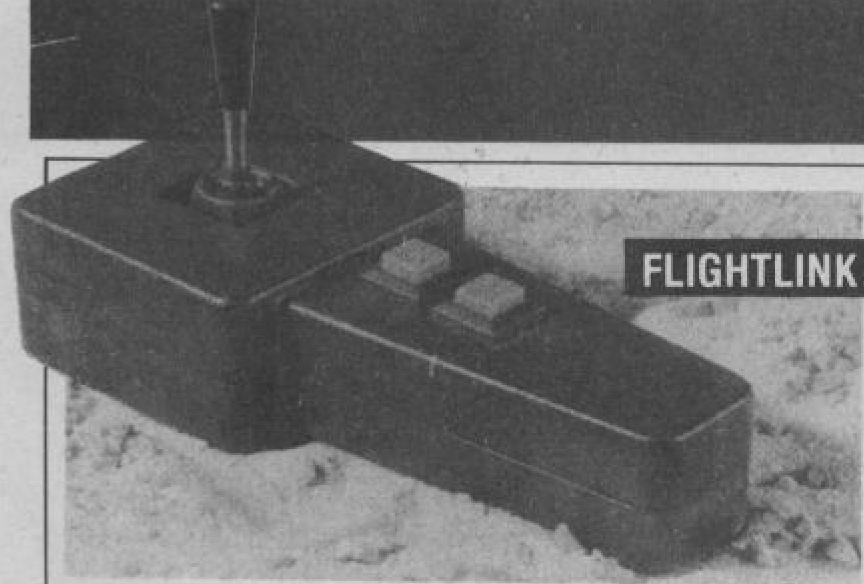
Main body flexes under use.

Stick Action
Travel: long.
Action force: heavy.
Reaction speed: poor.
Response/feedback: no feedback and generally poor response as casing flexes greatly during play.



Ergonomics: This unit clips over the edges of the computer and is made from one piece. This means that together with the stiff stick movement the unit flexes heavily during use, especially with more violent games, and this sometimes renders the key pressed inoperable. The tendency to move away from position during play can also disenable any 8 directional movement.

Life expectancy: not very high on fast games, and indeed there may be the slight chance of damaging the computer in a game like the Decathlon.



FLIGHTLINK

Supplier: Flightlink Control Ltd., Unit 12, The Maltings, Turk Street, Alton, Hants., Tel. (0420) 87241

Price: £10.50

Lever Action: Short Steel shaft suspended in brass ball bush and compression spring for self-centering action. Plastic bush activates subminiature microswitches.

Fire Action: 2 miniature square fire buttons at 6 o'clock. Two independent fire actions in combination with appropriate interface.

Ergonomics: No rubber feet. Lever shaped body for handheld operation. Left and righthanders welcome.

Lead: D type connector with plastic cover. No grommet.

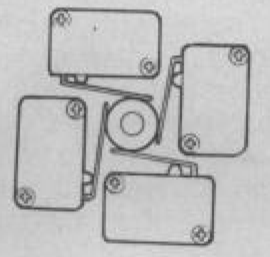
Weak point: Lead entry point unprotected.

Stick Action
Travel: long.
Action force: very light.
Reaction speed: fast.
Response/feedback: good, positive lock at end of travel for secondary compass points, but tends to slide on primary compass points (left/right/up/down).

Fire Action
Travel: medium long.
Action force: light.
Reaction speed: fast – good for rapid fire.
Response/feedback: some slack but reasonably firm and positive.

Ergonomics: handheld is very good because of small size and light weight but overall a bit pathetic on the table top. The 2 independent fire buttons are in a straight line, which make them a bit awkward for table use, as supporting hand is in the way.

Life expectancy: because of light action and metal construction, stands up to a hard game very well. Life should be quite good.



SLIK STIK

Supplier: Consumer Electronics Ltd., Failsworth, Manchester, M35 OHS, Tel. (061) 682 2339

Price: £9.95

Lever Action: Short rubber mounted steel shaft contacting 4 rigid contact plates in endposition. Tough short throw movement.

Fire Action: 1 lefthand round fire button at 10/11 o'clock position in enclosure. No trigger button.

Ergonomics: No rubber feet or suction cups. Small well rounded body for handheld operation. Left-handers only.

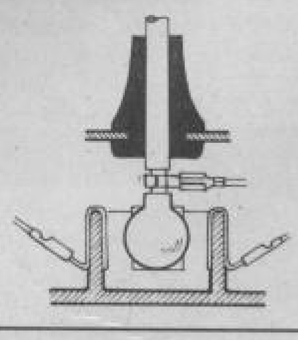
Lead: Plastic moulded D type connector and sleeved retaining grommet.

Weak point: Moulded plastic support wall for contact plates can crack and break off.

Stick Action
Travel: very short.
Action force: medium.
Reaction speed: good.
Response/feedback: quite positive feel and solid end stop with solid clunk.

Fire action
Travel: short.
Action force: medium to hard.
Reaction speed: good.
Response/feedback: sort of sticky feel, but solid end stop with loud clunk.

Ergonomics: lightweight construction and small size make it good for handheld use and reasonably stable on a table top. the corner position of the fire button is good for right handers, but poor for left handers.

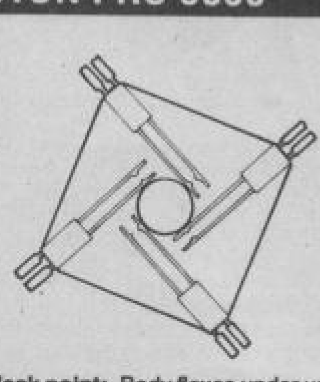




Life expectancy: Pretty good because of the short stick, short travel and steel shaft. It feels quite safe even on a hard game.

KEMPSTON PRO 5000





Supplier: Kempston Micro Electronics Ltd., Singer Way, Woburn Road Industrial Estate, Kempston, Bedford MK42 7AF, Tel. (0234) 856633

Price: £13.50

Lever Action: Strong steel shaft suspended in rubber bush. Leaf contact switches actuated by nylon bush.

Fire Action: 2 large arcade style round fire buttons actuating leaf contact switches.

Ergonomics: Average size well rounded enclosure for handheld operation. Rubber feet for table top operation.

Lead: Plastic moulded D type connector and moulded sleeved grommet.

Weak point: Body flexes under use.

Stick Action
Travel: short.
Action force: medium.
Reaction speed: instant.
Response/feedback: no audible feedback but fairly good reponse overall.

Fire action
Travel: very short.
Action force: very light – good rapid fire.
Reaction speed: fast.
Response/feedback: good with hard, positive feel.

Ergonomics: not very good for handheld use with the large base but reasonably steady on a table top. The two large arcade style fire buttons on the base are well placed for left or right hand use, and the round knob shaped stick is comfortable to hold. The slightly stiffer action of the stick on this verison of the 5000 make it slightly more tiring to use on the Decathlon.

Life expectancy: Good.

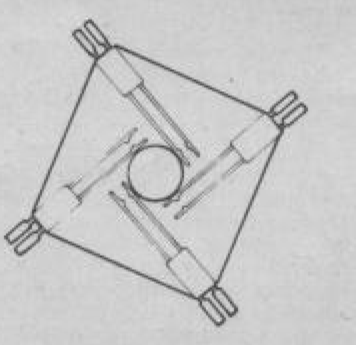
KEMPSTON PRO 3000



Supplier: Kempston Micro Electronics Ltd., Singer Way, Woburn Road Industrial Estate, Kempston, Bedford MK42 7AF, Tel. (0234) 856633

Price: £12.75

Lever Action: Hollow plastic shaft supported in rubber washer actuating 4 leaf contact switches.



Fire Action: 2 trigger buttons (trigger finger and thumb) and one banana shaped fire button at 12'o clock. All fire buttons operate one leaf contact switch.

Ergonomics: Small rubber feet. Handheld or table top operated.

Lead: Moulded D type connector and moulded sleeved grommet.

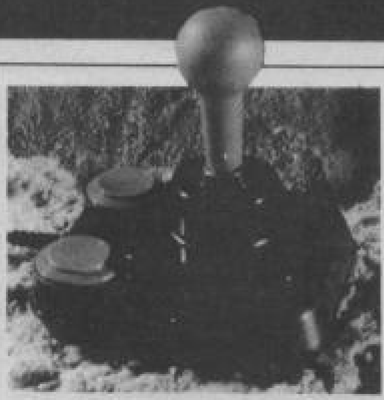
Weak point: very weak hollow plastic shaft.

Stick Action
Travel: medium long.
Action force: medium to hard.
Reaction speed: quite fast.
Response/feedback: slow, very soggy feel and imprecise.

Fire Action
Travel: base button medium – top and trigger buttons long
Action force: medium.
Reaction speed: poor.
Response/feedback: not very positive, soggy feel and no feedback.

Ergonomics: similar to PRO 1000 – top fire button badly placed for handheld use. On a table the base button is in the way of second hand holding base fire button which occupies most of the front of the base. Trigger fire is quite well placed.

Life expectancy: the hard game proved too much for this joystick, which broke, the stick snapping off at the base, before its ten minutes were up. The somewhat thin hollow plastic stick obviously lowers life expectancy rather drastically if hard games are going to be played with it.



COMPETITION PRO

Supplier: Euromax Electonics Ltd., Pinfold Lane Industrial Estate, Bridlington, N. Humberside, Tel. (0262) 602 541

Price: £16.95

Lever Action: Strong steel shaft suspended in rubber bush. 4 industry standard V3 microswitches actuated by plastic bush.

Fire Action: 2 large arcade style round fire buttons actuating leaf contact switches.

Ergonomics: Average size well rounded enclosure for handheld operation. Rubber feet for table top operation.

Plastic moulded D type connector and moulded sleeved grommet.

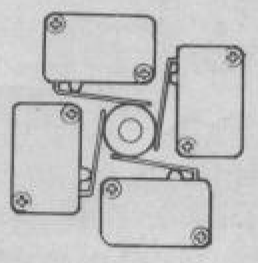
Weak point: Body flexes under action.

Stick Action
Travel: short, in fact just about right.
Action force: light.
Reaction speed: instant.
Response/feedback: although in most respects identical to the Pro 5000 this stick has audible clicks – generally very good.

Fire Action
Travel: very short.
Action force: very light – good rapid fire.
Reaction speed: Fast.
Response/feedback: good, with hard positive feel

Ergonomics: base too large for handheld use, stable on table top with well placed left hand fire buttons on base. Comfortable knob shaped stick.

Life expectancy: Good.





KEMPSTON PRO 1000

Supplier: Kempston Micro Electronics Ltd., Singer Way, Woburn Road Industrial Estate, Kempston, Bedford MK42 7AF, Tel. (0234) 856633

Price: £10.99

Lever Action: Hollow plastic shaft supported in rubber washer actuating 4 leaf conctact switches.

Fire Action: Banana shaped red fire button operates leaf contact switch.

Ergonomics: Handheld or table top operated (rubber feet).

Lead: Moulded D type connector and moulded sleeved grommet.

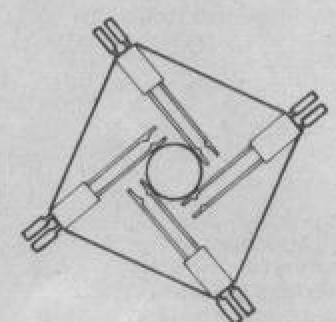
Weak point: Very weak hollow plastic shaft.

Stick Action
Travel: short.
Action force: hard.
Reaction speed: medium.
Response/feedback: no feedback, rubbery feel to the stick and even on a slow game it felt as though the handle might break at any second.

Fire Action
Travel: medium long.
Action force: medium hard and tiring for rapid fire.
Reaction speed: slow.
Response/feedback: no feedback, again – very rubbery.

Ergonomics: seems fine for handheld use at first, but not well designed as centre of gravity is all wrong to be able to operate stick and fire at the same time. Not too bad on a table top, quite stable with supporting hand holding it tightly, but too much resistance for single handed stick operation. Again, the long, curving base fire button gets in the way of the supporting hand.

Life expectancy: Joystick was rendered useless after two minutes of Decathlon, because the stick snapped off at the base. Same thin, hollow construction as the Pro 3000.



ATARI

Supplier: Atari International, Atari House, Railway Terrace, Slough, Berks, Tel. (0753) 33344.
Price: £7.50



Lever Action: Nylon shaft supported between pivot point and upper shoulder support. Nylon actuator ring activates 4 dome switches on pcb. Plastic gaiter and deformation of ring creates self-centering force.

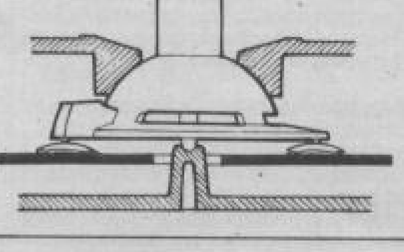
Fire Action: One round fire button at 10/11 o'clock activates dome switch.

Ergonomics: Average size square body for hand-held operation. Rubber feet for table top operation.
Lead: Moulded D type connector and moulded sleeved grommet.

Weak Point: Actuator ring will wear and snap.

Stick Action
Travel: short.
Action Force: light to medium.
Reaction Speed: good.
Response/Feedback: no feedback, soggy feel which gets soggier with use and hardens up with disuse.

Fire Action
Travel: medium.
Action Force: light.
Reaction Speed: good – very good rapid fire.
Response/Feedback: very firm feel but no feedback.
Ergonomics: the hand-sized square base and light construction are ideal for hand-held use, although the corner placed fire button can be awkward, and isn't very good for left-handers.
Life Expectancy: not too long, but reasonable considering price.







SUPER JOY

Supplier: Spectravideo Ltd., 165 Garth Road, Morden, Surrey SM4 4LH, Tel. 01 330 0101

Price: £9.95

Lever Action: Plastic shaft with actuator ring activating 4 dome switches on pcb. Deformation of ring creates selfcentering action. Shaft supported between lower pivot point and upper shoulder bearing.

Fire Action: 3 firing buttons, on lever thumb switch, two on side of enclosure (10 and 2 o'clock). All three activate dome switches.

Ergonomics: Slim body suitable for handheld operation. 4 suction cups for table operation.

Lead: Moulded D type connector and moulded sleeved grommet.

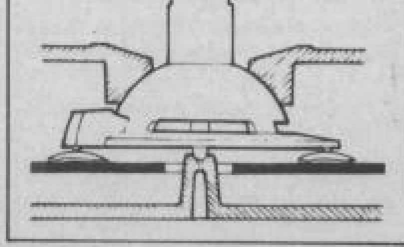
Weak point: Actuator ring will wear and snap.

Stick Action
Tavel: short.
Action force: very light.
Reaction speed: medium fast.
Response/feedback: not very good – a lot of play in the stick and then over travel.

Fire Action
Travel: short.
Action force: light.
Reaction speed: medium to slow.
Response/feedback: no good for rapid fire with top stick button and oddly placed twin fires on either side of the base. Quite a positive click.

Ergonomics: quite good for handheld use with slim sides to the base – we found the side buttons hard to use. On the table the narrow base with large suction cups make single handed stick operation hopeless, and the cups tend to give it a soggy feel overall. The long stick travel was found to be too much for the Decathlon and the thin base, even with supporting hand, makes it wobble too much in a fast game.

Life expectancy: if the unit had actually **had** good suction cups, it would have smashed to bits within minutes on the Decathlon – as it was the unit's base only lasted the ten minutes before coming apart at the base seam with the side buttons sliding inside. It was repairable.





FAMOUS REDBALL

Supplier: CGL, CGL House, Goldings Hill, Loughton, Essex IG10 2RR, Tel. (01) 508 5600

Price: £23

Lever Action: Long and hefty steel shaft supported in elastomeric bearing. Plastic ball sleeve activates 4 leaf contact switches.

Fire Action: Thumb activated lever switch activates leaf contact via central tappet and dome head. Round fire button at 10/11 o'clock activates further leaf contact.

Ergonomics: Large body with 4 rubber feet designed for table top operation.

Lead: Moulded D type connector and integrally moulded sleeved retaining grommet.

Special feature: Button selector switch for lever or enclosure fire button control.

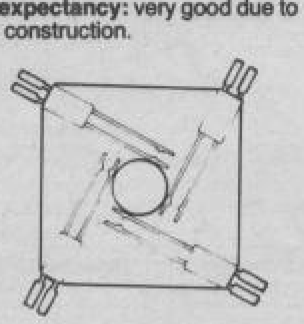
Weak point: Lever suspension allows slight axial movement which can activate fire leaf contact by mistake.

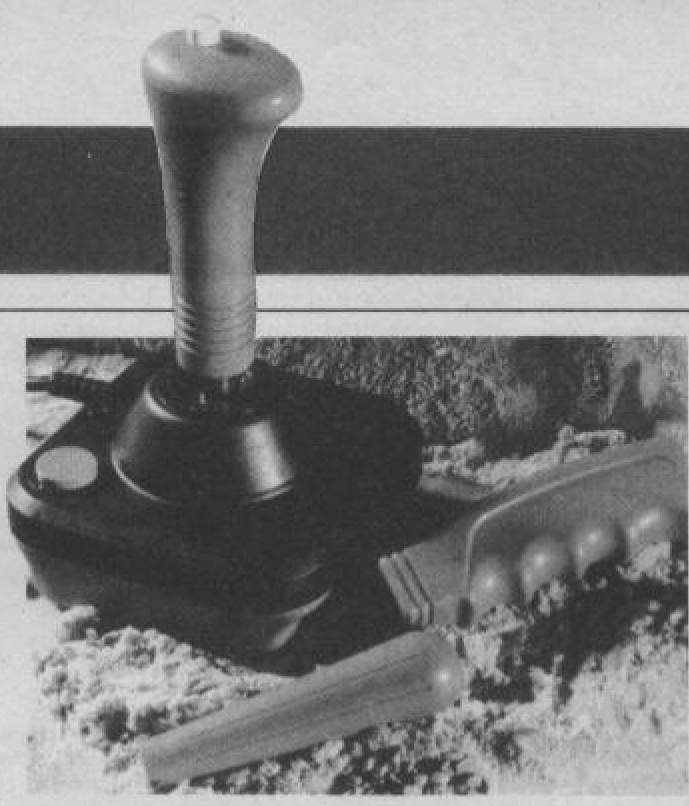
Stick Action
Travel: medium long.
Action force: medium.
Reaction speed: good.
Reponse/feedback: no audible feedback, reponse quite springy.

Fire Action
Travel: short to contact with over travel.
Action force: light.
Reaction speed: fast – good rapid fire from base, not bad from stick top.
Response/feedback: positive response, feels solid on base, less so on stick button.

Ergonomics: solid and heavy base make it very stable, but hard to hand hold. The round knob shaped stick is comfortable and very good for single handed use as the top fire button can be disenabled for hand over the top action. The disenabling switch is at the rear of the base. Flexing of the centre steel shaft, however, can cause unwanted firing action during direction movement, and is particularly pronounced during fast games.

Life expectancy: very good due to solid construction.





THREE WAY DELUXE

Supplier: CGL, CGL House, Goldings Hill, Loughton, Essex IG10 2RR, Tel. (01) 508 5600

Price: £25

Lever Action: Long tough steel shaft suspended in elastomeric bearing support. Plastic ball sleeve activates 4 leaf contact switches.

Fire Action: Thumb lever switch activates leaf contact via tappet and dome head. Extra fire button at 10/11 o'clock activates further leaf contact switch.

Ergonomics: Moulded D type connector and moulded sleeved retaining grommet.

Special feature: Fire function selector disables body mounted fire button. Three different grips provided, which can be pushed onto steel shaft. Grips have 360 degree rotation.

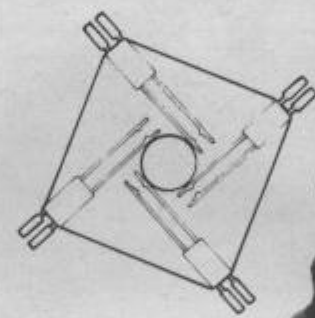
Weak point: Shaft suspension allows slight axial movement which can trigger off fire button inadvertently.

Stick Action
Travel: very long.
Action force: medium.
Reaction speed: good.
Response/feedback: some over travel, otherwise a positive end stop, no audible clicks.

Fire Action
Travel: medium on stick top and long on base button.
Action force: light.
Reaction speed: fast, good rapid fire from either button.
Response/feedback: light clicks, rather soft in feel.

Ergonomics: base identical to Famous Red Ball, so not good for handheld use but steady on table top. A base mounted slide switch allows either both or only one fire button to operate. The steel centre shaft has pull off handle which may be replaced with one of two others, so there is a moulded grip handle. This allows a wide range of individual grips and is an unusual feature. Again, like the Famous Red Ball, the flexing centre shaft can cause unwanted fire action during directional movement. On a fast game, the tendency of the handles to twist around the shaft can be disorienting.

Life expectancy: stood up very well, and because of solid construction, should have a long life.





THE BOSS

Supplier: CGL, CGL House, Goldings Hill, Loughton, Essex IG10 2RR, Tel. (01) 508 5600

Price: £13

Lever Action: Steel shaft supported in elastomeric bearing. Plastic ball sleeve activates 4 leaf contact switches.

Fire Action: Thumb activated lever switch activates leaf contact via tappet and dome head.

Ergonomics: Average size body for handheld operation. 4 rubber feet for table top operation. Lever grip can be rotated.

Lead: Moulded D type connector and integrally moulded sleeved retaining grommet.

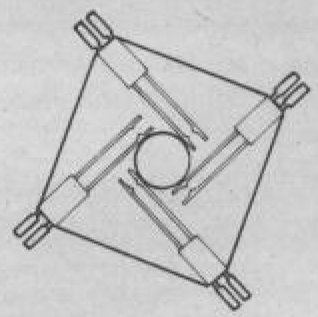
Weak point: Lever suspensin allows slight movement which can activate fire leaf contact by mistake.

Stick Action
Travel: long on over travel.
Action force: medium.
Reactin speed: medium.
Response/feedback: no feedback, response a little soft but reasonable.

Fire Action
Travel: short to contact with over travel.
Action force: very light.
Reaction speed: fast – good rapid fire.
Response/feedback: good positive response, no feedback.

Ergonomics: rather heavy, solid construction and large base makes it awkward to hand hold, although a rebated underlip at the front and back do help. Moulded handle grip and top stick fire are reasonable for either hand use or table top, where the weight makes it reasonably stable. The handle twists on the base, which is uncomfortable and disorienting.

Life expectancy: quite good as the whole is very solid but the long over travel on the tall stick may put it at risk on regular hard games.



VOLTMACE DELTA 3S

Supplier: Voltmace Ltd. Park Drive, Baldock, Herts SG7 6ET, Tel. (0462) 894410

Price: £10.00

Lever Action: Short steel shaft, gimble mechanism operating two small rotary switches, two small tension springs for selfcentering action.

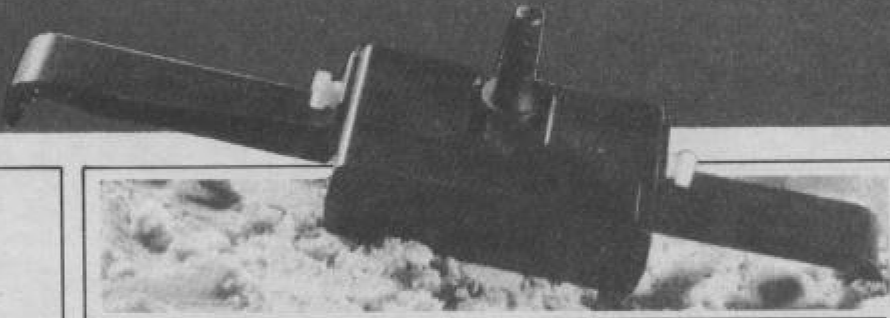
Fire Action: 3 small fire buttons operating rubber membrane switches. Two independent fire actions in conjunction with appropriate interface. Central green fire button F1, two red buttons for F2

Ergonomics: Calculator style flat enclosure for hand-held operation. No rubber feet for table top operation.

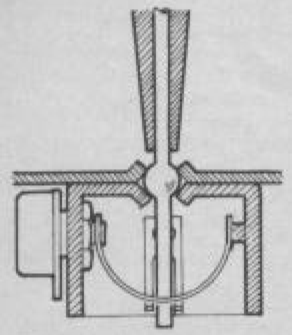
Lead: Moulded D type connector, no grommet.

Weak Point: Life of Rotary switch contacts may be limited, lead entry point.









Stick Action
Travel: long over-travel but short dead travel.
Action Force: exceptionally light
Reaction Speed: instant
Response/Feedback: very good response, not much feedback.

Fire Action
Travel: very short – more over travel.
Action Force: very light.
Reaction Speed: very good.
Response/Feedback: nice firm end to travel, not much feedback.

Ergonomics: above average for hand-held use with light stick travel and fire buttons within easy reach of thumb. This features 2 independent fire actions, with fire one using one button, and fire 2 using two for left or right-handed players. Very well laid out and light. It's long base makes it reasonable on the table although it moves in frenzied games.

Life Expectancy: quite good because of the steel shaft. It 'feels' safe.

SPECTRUM STICK

Supplier: Grant Design Ltd., Bank House, Repham, Norwich, Norfolk NR10 4JJ

Price: £9.95: Lever Action: Plastic handle suspended by lower pivot point and two upper slide plates with integrally moulded leaf spring for self-centering. Slide plate cams activate key plungers.

Fire Action: None

Fixing: Left and right grip arms with stud and wing nuts.

Weak point: Plastic arm will wear and snap.

Stick Action
Travel: very long.
Action force: very light.
reaction speed: good.
Response/feedback: no audible feedback, but feels positive.

Ergonomics: this is a cursor key clip on joystick unit which mechanically depresses the curor keys. It operates well in 8 directions and is quickly attached to the keyboard, leaving the zero key free for fire action. The short stick moves freely and feels good. Obviously it cannot be handheld and when attached to the computer is very stable!

Life expectancy: surprisingly good, considering its light construction but not designed to withstand the onslaught of too many Decathlons.



ARCADE PROFESSIONAL

Supplier: Euromax Electronics Ltd., Pinfold Lane Industrial Estate, Bridlington, N. Humberside, Tel. (0262) 602541

Price: £28.95

Lever Action: Short and strong steel shaft rotating in ball joint bush with compressed spring and nylon washer for self-centering action. 4 industry standard V3 lever operated microswitches actuated by nylon bush. Extra plastic end stop bush for 8 or 4 way action.

Fire Action: 2 large bodymounted arcade style round fire buttons.

Ergonomics: Large arcade style console for two hand operation. Heavy metal base with foam pad for stable table top use. Console top out of GRP with silver flake black high-gloss paint.

Lead: Plastic moulded D type connector. Non retaining round grommet.

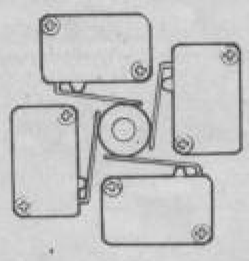
Weak point: None.

Stick Action
Travel: medium to long.
Action force: ligh.
Reaction speed: instant.
Response/feedback: good to excellent, very positive.

Fire Action
Travel: medium to long.
Action force: light.
Reaction speed: very fast – excellent for rapid fire.
Response/feedback: good, solid feel and clunky feedback.

Ergonomics: handheld – you've got to be joking! It's huge! the large sized arcade style box makes it excellently stable and it has a low centre of gravity, hardly moves at all. Nice big arcade style fire buttons make life easy.

Life expectancy: very good, it feels solid. Everyone felt this was just about the best on a hard game.





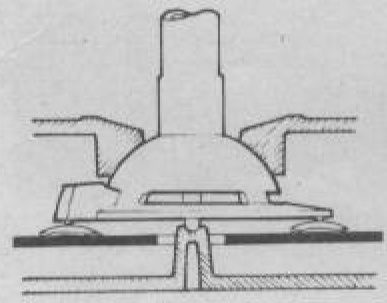
QUICKSHOT 1

Supplier: Spectravideo Ltd, 165 Garth Road, Morden, Surrey SM4 4LH, Tel. (01) 330 0101.
Price: £9.95
Lever Action: Plastic shaft supported between pivot point and upper shoulder support. Plastic actuator ring actuates 4 dome switches on pcb. Deformation of ring creates self-centering effect.
Fire Action: One round fire button at 10/11 o'clock activates dome switch. Lever thumb switch activates dome switch.
Ergonomics: Average size well rounded body for hand-held operation. 4 suction pads for table top operation.
Lead: Moulded D type connector and moulded sleeved retaining grommet.
Weak Point: Very weak actuator ring will wear and snap.

Stick Action
Travel: very long.
Action Force: light to medium.
Reaction Speed: good.
Response/Feedback: audible click, but it didn't feel very responsive.

Fire Action
Travel: short.
Action Force: medium.
Reaction Speed: slow.
Response/Feedback: audible click with positive feel, but resistance makes for poor rapid fire speeds.

Ergonomics: the long stick and large base with big suckers makes it poor for hand-held use, but reasonably stable on a table with the suction cups, although they give it a soggy feel



Life Expectancy: not very long, showed signs of splitting along base seam, and the base area of the stick was starting to wear where it enters the base.



QUICKSHOT 2

Supplier: Spectravideo Ltd., 165 Garth Road, Morden, Surrey SM4 4LH, Tel. (01) 330 0101

Price: £11.95

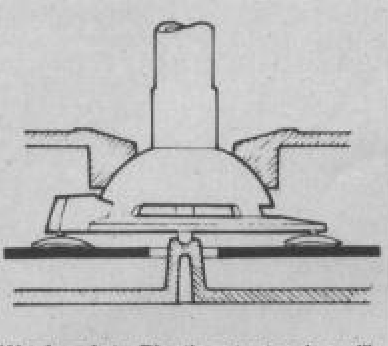
Lever Action: Plastic shaft supported between pivot point and upper shoulder support. Plastic actuator ring activates 4 dome switches on pcb. Deformation of ring creates self centering force.

Fire Action: Large trigger fire button and lever thumb switch both activating dome switches.

Ergonomics: Average size moulded body for handheld operation. 4 suction feet for table top operation.

Lead: Moulded D type connector and integrally moulded sleeved retaining grommet.

Special feature: Rapid fire action increases firing power on single shot games. Provided constant stream of firing signals. Will not work with all interfaces, as it requires non standard +5V supply on the D connector.



Weak point: Plastic actuator ring will wear and snap.

Stick Action
Travel: medium long.
Action force: medium.
Reaction speed: good.
Response/feedback: no feedback, overall rather soggy feel to it.

Fire Action
Travel: very short.
Action force: light.
Reaction speed: good – reasonable rapid fire.
Response/feedback: good, positive feel and audible click.

Ergonomics: no good for hand held use with large base and suction cups in the way, although this makes it good on a table. This joystick has a Rapid Fire slide switch, which is badly placed so that the supporting hand tends to knock it on, and it doesn't always work with the Spectrum, causing all sorts of disasters! Top stick and trigger fire buttons are usefully placed.

Life expectancy: better than Quickshot 1, medium expectancy – the long stick and travel means it gets rather a battering in fast games, especially with the full hand grip required.

TRIGA COMMAND



Supplier: Datel Electronics, Unit 8 Fenton Ind. Estate, Dewsbury Road, Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent, Tel. (0782) 273815

Price: £19.99 (excl. P & P)

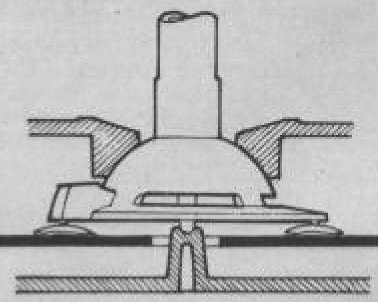
Lever Action: Nylon shaft supported between pivot point and upper ball support. Nylon actuator ring activates 4 dome switches on pcb. Deformation of ring creates self-centering action.

Fire Action: Trigger button forces large copper contact to solid contact post.

Ergonomics: Average size square body for handheld operation or with 3 separate suction cups for table operation. Large handgrip with trigger button.

Lead: Moulded D type connector and moulded sleeved grommet.

Weak point: Actuator ring and handgrip rotation stoppers will snap.



Stick Action
Travel: very long, although travel to response is short with long over travel.
Action force: very light.
Reaction speed: very fast
Response/feedback: good response, long travel after contact makes life easy, no audible feedback.

Fire Action
Travel: short to response, long over travel.
Action force: very light.
Reaction speed: medium – trigger action tires finger rapidly on fast firing games.
Response/feedback: audible click – long travel after contact makes for a tiring fire action.

Ergonomics: too large a base for comfortable handheld use, but light action and solid base make it very steady on a table. The large girth stick is comfortable to hold but the trigger fire is awkwardly placed so that the finger tends to squeeze off it, and its edges are quite sharp. This stick only has a trigger fire.

Life expectancy: The large handle tends to twist too much and this combined with the long over travel makes it feel unsafe on a hard game, as though the stick would break off. It survived the ten minutes however.



THE ARCADE

Supplier: Euromax Electronics Ltd., Pinfold Lane Industrial Estate, Bridlington, N. Humberside, Tel. (0262) 602541

Price: £15.95

Lever Action: Steel shaft supported in tough rubber washer. Plastic dome on shaft activates 4 subminiature lever microswitches. Self-centering with rubber washer and plastic nose for endstop.

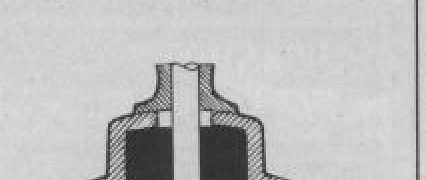
Fire Action: Single large red fire button activates subminiature microswitch. Light action.

Ergonomics: Hand or table operation with 4 rubber feet. Solid feel and operation.

Lead: Moulded D type connector and moulded sleeved grommet.

Weak point: None.

Stick Action
Travel: very short.
Action force: hard.
Reaction speed: slow and not very delicate.
Reponse/feedback: not very good because of overall stiffness.



Fire Action
Travel: long
Action force: medium
Reaction speed: slow – not good for rapid fire.
Response/feedback: audible click, but soggy in feel.

Ergonomics: quite good to hold, although the smallish, tapered base cause the hand to slip forwards in use. On the table, very stable with quiet games, although moves a bit on the faster ones because of hard action force required.

Life expectancy: quite good, seems robust enough.

This review does not cover the entire spectrum of joysticks on the market. Below you will find a further list of joysticks which may be reviewed in a later issue – God and the manufacturers of joystick willing. Please ask the suupliers listed in this review where to get hold of their products – not all operate a mail order service.

COOKBRIDGE SURESHOT

Supplier: Cookbridge Computer Supplies, P.O. Box 1 W9, Leeds LS1 6NT, Tel. (0532) 670625

Price: £15.95

CRACKSHOT

Supplier: Jiles Electronics, 48 Parkway, Chellaston, Derby DE7 1QA

Price: £7.50

SUPERCHAMP

Supplier: Dean Electronics Ltd., Glendale Park, Fernbank Road, Ascot, Berks, Tel. (0344) 885661

Price: £12.95

QUICKSHOT 2+2

(modified Quickshot 2 with 2 independent fire actions and no rapid fire action)

Suppliers: Frel Ltd., 1 Hockeys Mill, Temeside, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1PD, Tel. (0584) 4894

Price: £13.95

LS JOYSTICK

Supplier: Solidisk Technology Ltd., Sinclair Computer Add-ons Division, 17 Sweyne Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 6 JQ, Tel. (0702) 354674

Price: £9.95

STARFIGHTER

Supplier: Consumer Electronics Ltd., Failsworth, Manchester M35 OHS, Tel. (061) 682 2339

Price: £13.95

TAC 2

Suplier: Consumer Electronics Ltd., Failsworth, Manchester M35 OHS, Tel (061) 682 2339

Price: £18.95

JOY SENSOR

Supplier: Consumer Electronics Ltd., Failsworth, Manchester M35 OHS, Tel. (061) 682 2339

Price: £29.95



COMCON



Programmable Joystick Interface for the Spectrum

£19.95
incl. VAT and P & P



Simple and fast programming: Plug the six function connectors into the required Spectrum key positions — Ready!

Two independent fire actions: Photon Blasters and Neutron Bombs at the touch of your fingertips.

Extension port for Currah Micro-speech unit: Combine joystick with sound and speech for ultimate arcade action.

Compatible with all Atari-type joysticks including Quickshot II (without rapid fire action).

Interface operates joystick parallel to keyboard. Joystick action compatible with any add-ons including Microdrives.

Select key functions anytime — even when the game is already loaded.

QUICKSHOT 2+2 JOYSTICK
modified to incorporate 2 independent fire actions and no rapid fire option
£13.95 incl. VAT and P & P

CURRAH μSPEECH UNIT
fits into COMCON extension slot
£29.95 incl. VAT and P & P

FLIGHTLINK JOYSTICK
with 2 independent fire actions
£10.50 incl. VAT and P & P

ALSO AVAILABLE FROM SELECTED RETAIL OUTLETS

Dealer Enquiries Welcome
Phone Ludlow (0584) 4894

Send to:
FREL LTD. Hockeys Mill, Temeside, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1PD

Mr/Mrs/Miss ______________________

Address ______________________

______________________ Postcode ______________________

Qty	Code	Item	Item Price	Total £
	01	Comcon Interface	@ £19.95	
	02	Flightlink Joystick	@ £10.50	
	03	Quickshot 2+2 Joystick	@ £13.95	
	04	Comcon + Quickshot 2+2	@ £31.90	
	05	Comcon + Flightlink	@ £28.45	
	06	Currah μSpeech unit	@ £29.95	

I enclose a cheque/postal order made payable to FREL LTD for: £

COMCON

FREL LTD.

STATACOM

Statacom Distribution Ltd, sole UK Distributors of Datafax 3″ Disk Drives, proudly announce the introduction of the New Datafax Spectrum Disk Interface.

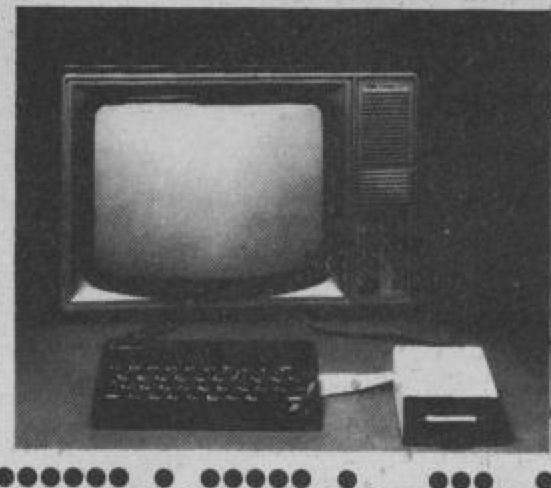
The Interface connector fits neatly into the rear expansion slot on the Spectrum via a high quality, gold plated card edged connector, and still allows full usage of other peripherals (Printer, Joystick etc).

A system reset button is also included in the Interface connector.

The disk operating system, designed for the Hitachi 3″ disk drive uses only 8K of user memory and gives easy to learn commands to run the drive.

The Interface comes complete with Utility Disk and comprehensive Datafax Disk Interface Manual.

Also suitable for 5¼″ single sided drives.



You saw us at the P.C.W. Show — Now write or phone for details

Statacom Price £75 + VAT

As a special introductory package Statacom offer the Hitachi 3″ Disk Drive Unit, complete with Power Supply Unit, Utility Disk, leads and cables plus the new Interface at only £245 + VAT (Normal R.P. £271 + VAT)

STATACOM

18 GROVE ROAD SUTTON SURREY Tel 01 661-2266

Name ______________________

Address ______________________

____

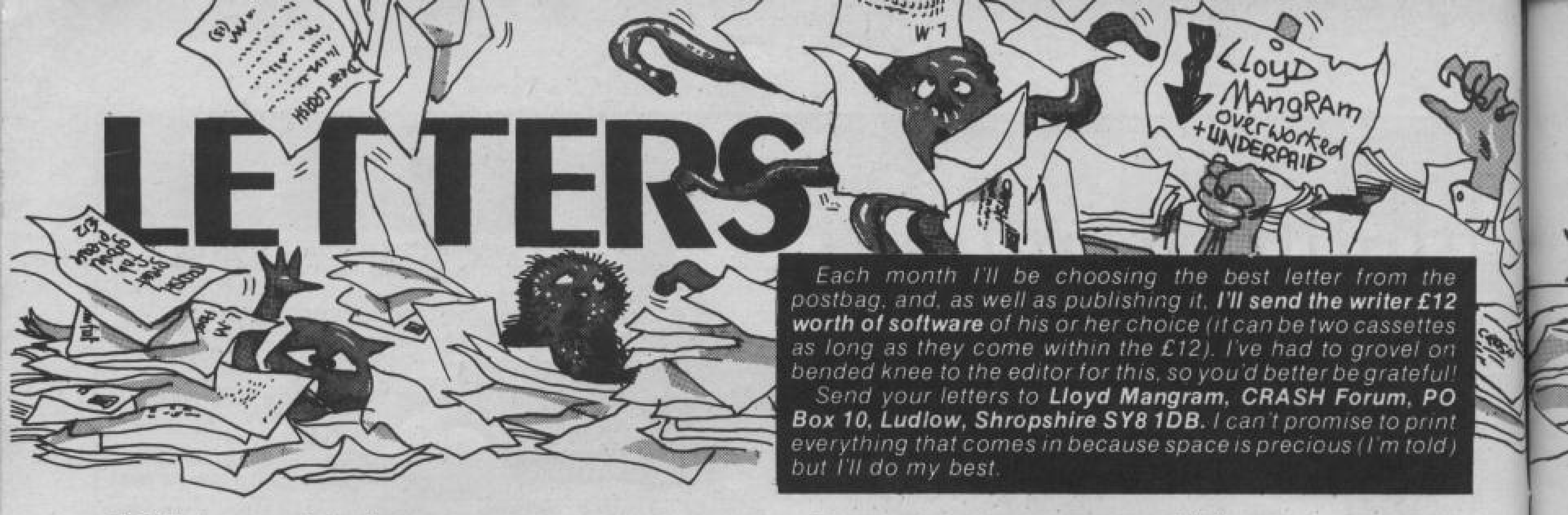
Tel. ______________________

For dealer enquiries information please attach letterhead

Please tick requirements:
- ☐ Full Brochure Pack
- ☐ Dealer Information
- ☐ 3″Tech Details
- ☐ Interface Details

C/M

Generous Dealer Terms available



*Each month I'll be choosing the best letter from the postbag, and, as well as publishing it, **I'll send the writer £12 worth of software** of his or her choice (it can be two cassettes as long as they come within the £12). I've had to grovel on bended knee to the editor for this, so you'd better be grateful!*
*Send your letters to **Lloyd Mangram, CRASH Forum, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.** I can't promise to print everything that comes in because space is precious (I'm told) but I'll do my best.*

CRASH does seem to inspire some very strong feelings in people, I don't know why. There are always so many very nice letters and quite a few nasty ones. It means I sit here reading through them bathed in tears or wreathed in smiles! Still, that's half the fun of the thing, and in reply to the person who wrote complaining of my calling another reader 'a wimp', can I just say that I sometimes have my opinions too. I don't actually try to be insulting, but well, you know how it is sometimes. . .

Tons of letters again this month about diverse topics like piracy, price of software, hatred of cheat POKEs, requests for more of same, complaints about too many ads and the opposite and also some letters I am printing; but for its topicality and clarity of idea, I think the following letter gets my vote for the month. . .

PICKING UP THE PIECES

Dear CRASH,
I am writing to you about this new standard from Japan called MSX; surely this standard cannot work? Suppose MSX was well established in Britain with most of the British software firms writing software for it. How long would it take the Japanese to realise that with their standard being a best seller that they could also take over a large share of the British software market? All they would have to do is sell their software at unbelievably low prices (after all, they could afford to, the companies producing MSX are giant concerns like Sony). The British firms making MSX games probably couldn't do this because of development costs, or they woud be losing money in selling a game so cheap, so that it just wouldn't be worth being in the games market. A lot of companies would go bust, leaving the Japanese picking up the pieces, whereby they would take over the software house and its team of programmers. After taking over sufficient numbers they would be able to sell MSX games at any price they liked, using British programming talent to make handsome profits.

Another point, how long could MSX survive if it was well established? What would be the point in buying another MSX machine if you already had one? The new machine wouldn't be able to offer a lot more than your old machine already had, except a larger memory perhaps. One of the main reasons for buying another computer is that you want something a lot better than your old one! Advances in chip design ensures that nearly all computers are better than their predecessors, but no computer is future proof and neither is MSX. Something better always comes along, which is just as well because if the same thing had happened to cars as what MSX proposes to do with computers, then everyone would be driving model T Fords!

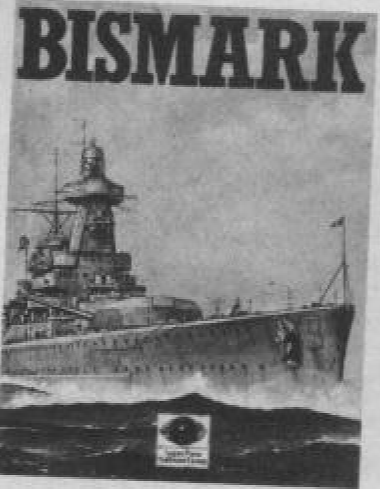
The stupid thing about the MSX standard is that the companies producing it will be undercutting each other's prices in an attempt to make their micro the best seller. I hope MSX never gets off the ground in this country. I feel so strongly about this because if the Japanese see a good market then they will try and get their hooks into it. If we stick together, software houses and the consumer alike, in boycotting this standard, then we will all be better off in the long run. The Japanese obviously see Britain as a rich picking as far as the computer industry is concerned, as I understand they are planning a £75m silicon chip plant at Livingstone. I hope you print this letter, it would be a great pity if there was no area left that we could call a British market. Buy British while you still can.
T. Henry, Sunderland, Tyne & Wear

I think a lot of the points raised here bear thinking about and would be interested to know what others think about MSX. One thing at the outset to say, is that few of the planned MSX machines, available any day, are exactly cheap, hardly any being much under £300, and none of them really offering anything more than the Spectrum at less than half the price (except inter machine compatibility). Is inter-machine compatibility worth paying twice the price for and the long term price of losing out to an inferior standard? Let's hear.
LM

Our new column Front Line has resulted in a few letters (early days yet) quite a number of them remarking on the strong tone taken by Angus Ryall on strategy games in general. This one was a bit more specific. . .
LM

CONFRONTATION LINE

Dear Sir,
Nice to see someone finally get round to wargames, but you did make one or two mistakes.
Bismark turns out to be the Admiral Graf Spee – one turret not two, the bridge stands out a mile away because only pocket battleships had that type of bridge, but I couldn't find the third gun on the turret. The game itself looks like a simple copy of *North Atlantic Convoy Raider*, except the computer is the Bismark. This is far simpler to program than to control 12 ships – and you are the Brits.



North Atlantic Convoy Raider is made by Avalon Hill, Americans and came out in 1981 for the Atari, Apple, PET and TRS-80. At the time of its release these computers had been around for at least 2 or three years, which is the same time span as the Spectrum and its wargames.
Confrontation. The reason why you can't see what the enemy units are is because no commander in war ever knows who or what the enemy is until one of his units meet them. The idea of reconnaissance Scout units is to find out just that. You can also use aircraft in this role, as in war, and it does give a role for your transporters once they have dropped off their paras.

Finally we come to the future. A certain company called Games Workshop will be releasing a wargame which is called *D-Day*, as you probably know. I had a look at it in the recent PCW Show. The game looks nice and is well designed, and I will probably buy it, but it is based around the squad level sized unit, 8 men per unit or one tank, which means again that Monty and Rommel will not get a look in. US Gold will also be Releasing Some Wargames. Lothlorien will be as well, one of which will introduce new standards to the Spectrum as only previously seen on the Atari wargames such as *Eastern Front*. How do I know? Simple, I wrote it.
K.F. Baker, North Anston, Nr. Sheffield, Yorks.
PS I do agree that *Bismark is rubbish*.

I must confess to being slightly puzzled about your comments regarding Bismark, *as to whether you are saying Angus was in error or ASP software?*
LM

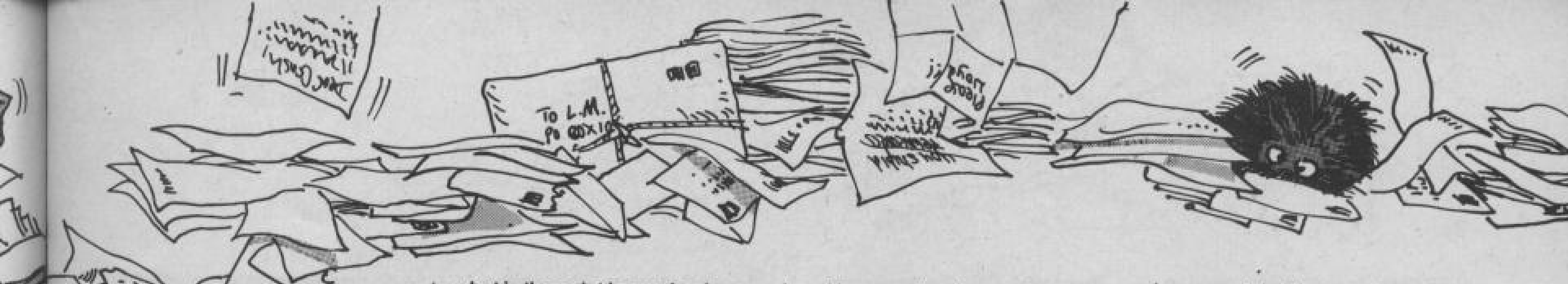
LLOYD WOZ 'ERE

Dear Lloyd,
After reading CRASH's review of Sinclair's *Stop the Express* I rushed out and bought a copy. After a few games, I must say that it is extremely addictive and in my opinion, more playable than the much vaunted *Sabre Wulf*, and certainly cheaper. However, the main point of putting finger to typewriter is to inform you that I have finally solved the mystery of the spelling mistakes that occasionally crop up in our magazine. I managed to stop the Express and was greeted by a wondrous message:

CONGRATURATION YOU SUCSESS

Immediately I thought, 'allo, 'allo, I know where this programmer now works (he obviously got the sack when Uncle Clive played the game). So, Lloyd, you're not really to blame, it's those Sinclair people's fault and you are hereby exonerated.

In a more serious vein, I wonder why software houses who produce adventure games have to charge so much. Surely the games are no more complex than *Manic Miner* or *Jet Set Willy* etc? Incentive Software will always have my support as long as they continue to produce such excellent games as *Mountains of*





Ket, *Temple of Vran* and so on, for the very reasonable price of £5.50. Even Level 9, whose adventures are magnificent, could well charge lower prices and still make a profit.

I'm only a recent subscriber but I find the playing tips both for arcade and adventure games just what I have been looking for, and your point the other day about not releasing POKEs as soon as you receive them is, I think, misguided. The more kids get to know how to get more enjoyment out of a game, the more the word gets round and eventually the more games are bought. Isn't that what you and the software houses want?
J.A. Lockerby, Aylesham, Canterbury, Kent.

As far as Stop the Express *is concerned, I've never been on a train before (long distance buses are more my price bracket), so I'm definitely not responsible for Sinclair's appalling spelling! I'm not sure whether programmers would agree with you that adventure games are easier to write (sounds like a question for Derek) than arcade, which could reflect on the price difference, but I do agree, that there is probably a thing about adventures having to cost more, because that's the way it so often seems to have been. On the other hand, there are many less adventures sold than a popular arcade games, and that means each unit has to cost a bit more, although some software houses do seem to keep the price down well.*

The next writer disagrees about the POKEs – terribly. . .
LM

POKERITIS

Just a short POKE letter hailing my concern, disgust, anger and utter POKE THIS frustration at your playing tips item. I have contracted Pokeritis. Though it is yet in its infancy, it spreads rapidly, classical symptoms being itchy fingers to get at the cheat page, a highly used Ø key and POKE key.

As I wish to read, cover to cover, your whole magazine to obtain my money's worth (PEEK a boo), and as I wholeheartedly sympathise with Mr. Sutherland and Spiegal in the month's issue dated September and August respectively, I really feel I must echo their sentiments. I mean, what is the point in purchasing an original game and before you've even typed POKE THAT LOAD"" you glimpse out of the corner of your eye this pokery POKE. No sooner have you seen the cursed hieroglyphics now etched on your feeble mind, than the game's once long life has been foreshortened to a few minutes and is no sooner started than finished. What a waste of money.
Poke, The Peekery, Pokingly.

Well, I suppose that's one view, but. . .

Dear Lloyd,
In response to Richard Spiegal's letter in issue 7, nobody is forcing him to read and use all the POKEs and things in playing tips. But please keep it for those of us who don't want to cheat. And if he writes 140,000 words, he might just make to odd mistake as well. Mindless little Moron. . .
Martin Leighton, Chester, Cheshire.

Now Now, Martin, we'll be losing more readers like that! Anyway, your sentiments were also echoed by the next reader. . .

ONE DAY, SAID SUTHERLAND

Dear Lloyd,
Having read every issue of CRASH I have become increasingly aware of the number of people that write in to complain about cheating. They claim that your printing of certain POKEs for infinite lives etc., and tips on how to complete a certain screen/game spoils their entertainment. However, I have never noticed anyone forcing me to read or even practice the tips given, and neither does the fact that I may know how to get infinite lives on a game spoil my enjoyment of the game, since, once again, I am not compelled to use the routine given. However, the final straw was in the September issue, when Chris Sutherland first writes a cynical letter complaining about such POKEs, and then also includes a routine to give 253 lives in *Lunar Jetman*! This is obviously a man who believes in the saying, practice what you preach! As a result of this, I have written a small poem to Mr. Sutherland;

"I know," one day said Sutherland,
As ball-point pen he held in hand,
"I'll write to CRASH in cynical style,
Lloyd Mangram I'll attempt to rile.
I'll comment on POKEs and tips galore,
And then, very quietly, through the back door,
I'll post my routine for Lunar Jetman,
On how to get 253 lives and then some.
No one will notice my lack of sincerity,
On the topic of POKEing to gain immortality.
And if someone does then what does it matter,
The important thing is that CRASH publish my letter,
Since then I may be the one to receive,
£12 of software with which to relieves,
My urge to hack at somebody's program,
Until 253 lives I can store in my Spectrum."

R.E. Feagan, Anfield, Liverpool

Unfortunately, as many readers have already noted, the egregious Mr. Chris Sutherland has probably had the last laugh in this matter, since the POKE he so kindly and cynically offered, doesn't work, and indeed tends to crash the game!

Before leaving the subject of to POKE or not to POKE, here's a letter with a slightly differnt slant. . .
LM

A COMPUTER WITH BRASS HANDLES

Dear Lloyd,
I just thought I would write and say well done to Johan Kallum after his letter in September's CRASH. He asked for playing tips and signpost to be coded to make it a little harder.

You see Johan, we're not all professors, and there are a lot of people like myself that cannot understand how to program, or break into programs, on their Spectrums. I have not yet managed to make anything happen using POKEs in playing tips, but I'm still trying. Perhaps at 27 I'm a bit long in the tooth to learn about computers. I expect



you are very clever when it comes to this type of thing. Perhaps you learned all about computers at school. Well at my school even the calculators had handles that you had to turn – they were big heavy metal objects and were as much use as an old sock. So all I'm saying is try to understand that magazines like CRASH are for all people with computers, and not just for those people that are so good and capable that they find they are getting bored and want to make things harder and more challenging. Well if you want something more challenging, try beating my hi-score on *Sabre Wulf*, which is 207,369 at 97%, completed.
A computer wally, Keith Collis, Linton, Maidstone, Kent

you should worry, Keith, our screen photo person keeps sticking his head into the main editorial room to ask, 'Sorry, can you tell me again how to get LOAD CODE""? Anyway, we've all got our problems, haven't we? My main one at the moment is that Derek Brewster is apparently furious at me having given the game away over Lords of Midnight *in the Playing Tips. He reckons they should make me resign and give my salary to him. All I can say is, if Derek can get by on ten quid a week, he's welcome to it! (On the subject of money, the Powers that Be have taken away the tea and coffee and replaced the kitchen with a coin-op vending machine – now it costs 10p. a cup!*

Anyway, onto the subject of ads in CRASH. . .
LM

BUNCH EM UP

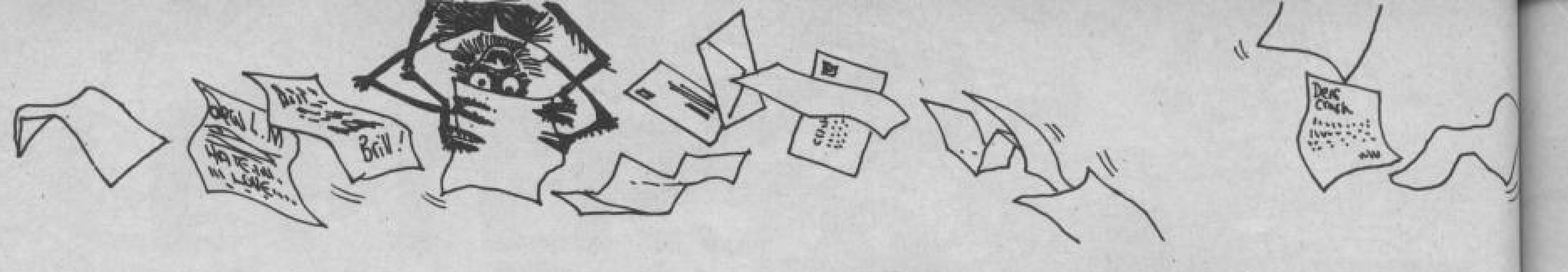
Dear Sir,
Concerning the letters you seem to be getting lately about your GREAT magazine having too many adverts. The obvious answer perhaps is to simply separate the editorial from the ads. Those who don't wish to read them can just skip past to the best bit. There is the room to fit more ads without complaint.

More advertisements means more CRASH income, which means a better magazine, which means more readers, which means more ads. . .

Simple.
Mark Henry, Ballsbridge, Dublin.

Sounds like a recipe for success – the last bit I mean! It's actually quite traditional for magazines (in any field) to bunch up ads at the front and rear usually. This makes it much easier to plan an issue as well. Unfortunately advertisers do not really like this, since the argument goes that they are paying to help the magazine exist by being there, so people should be forced to see the ads (whether they're read is up to the individual reader of course), and if you get thirty or forty ads all next to each other, this doesn't work. CRASH has always tried to scatter the ads throughout to give everyone the best of all possible worlds.
LM





USEFUL ADVERTS

Dear CRASH,
I am replying to Darren White's letter about too many ads in the September issue. I have just bought a programmable joystick interface for my Spectrum. Without CRASH's adverts I might have unwittingly bought the A. Daley Conshop version. I am now planning to buy a keyboard, and there is a wide choice, so adverts are very helpful when buying add-ons.

J. Tedstone, Kinsbridge, Devon.

For myself, I find advertisements in almost any magazine interesting to look at and read – not all of them of course, some are boring. But computer advertising seems particularly imaginative and colourful. The next reader seems to think so too. . .
LM

BRIGHTENING UP

Dear CRASH,
I am writing to you to complain about those people who write to you to complain about your brilliant magazine. For a start, people who say your mag isn't glossy enough are loopy. When I read CRASH I have to read it in semi-darkness because the light reflects off it so much.

Also, those idiots who say there are too many adverts in CRASH. The adverts help brighten up the pages and also tell you what software and hardware there is about.

I would like to thank John Tapper for his very amusing letter in October's issue. I am probably one of all CRASH readers who is against listings. Listings in mags are the ultimate sin.

Ian Williams, Pwllheli, Gwynedd.

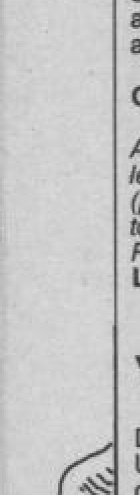
As I said at the start, not every letter is dripping with praise (perhaps that would be too much to ask), and here is one that isn't. Fasten your seatbelts. . .
LM

YEA, VERILY VERILY. . .

Dear CRASH,
Upon reading through your mag, I can't help but notice how biased you are. What! the readers cry, looking up from screen 45 of *Chuckie Egg* in horror. Biased!! CRASH!!??

Oh yea, dearest readers! Sit you down with a mug of milky tea and turn off *Jet Set Willy* for a moment. You'll get use to it in time.

Please don't think this is a blatant attempt to tear apart all your reviews and ideas, because it isn't. However, when I read your review of *Sabre Wulf* way back in issue 6, I couldn't help laughing cynically.



Be honest, CRASH, how many times do you lower a game's percentage when reviewing it if you see it uses the cursor or ZX Sinclair interface keys (6-Ø)? Yet when Ultimate uses its QWERT combination (a handful only equalled by the crappier layouts of Crystal) you don't mention it.

And how about the price increase? From £5.50 to £9.95? I quote:

"Despite the price increase, still good value." Come on CRASH, is *Sabre Wulf* really that magically brilliant? Or are you all so in awe of Ultimate that you'd pay £99 for their most meagre offering?

Before all your readers write in saying they'd give their right arms to play *Sabre Wulf*, let me say that I don't believe it one bit. It's only a program, not the Holy Grail, not a gold reincarnation of Joan Collins. Perhaps you'd like to erect a Sabre Wulf shrine, where thousands of Lunar Jetmen could meet and meditate on life, the universe and the ACG Key?

I am not out to tear apart Ultimate's games, nor its players, but I am annoyed by your constant bias towards them who, in your eyes, can do no wrong. (or so it would seem). I just feel you go completely overboard and your habit of recommending their games as the New Messiah and as an alternative to religion is childish and silly. It is due to this kind of review that *PCG* Magazine insults you the way it does.

Three last points for you to stew over as you gnash your teeth and stick pins into little dollies of me; One, how come *Punchy* got a much higher percentage than *Krakatoa* yet wasn't a game of the month is issue 2? Two; CRASH is a Spectrum mag, and a good one too, so why do your reviews compare the best games to ones on other machines (i.e. *Kosmic Kanga* and *Full Throttle*?) Three; Did you have to make it so obvious that you view successfull programmers as anything but normal people? I refer to your Virgin Sorcerer article, quoting: 'Do you have a girlfriend?' What on earth does that have to with anything, let alone computer software? You aren't running a Cathy and Claire problem page you know!

Happy retaliating!

Rob Holmes, Wirksworth, Derbyshire.

Rob Holmes of Wirksworth, Derbyshire, well done, you get this month's Lloyd Mangram Lose-a-Reader-Insult, for your twerpish inpertinence! Looking at the last points first – (gnash, gnash), about Punchy *and* Krakatoa*, you're overlooking the fact that the overall percentage is not carved on stone to be obeyed literally. I think if you re-read the two reviews in question you will see that overall the impressions of the reviewers was that* Krakatoa *was the better game. It lost out against* Punchy *on use of computer and getting started for the stated reasons. About other machines; lots of readers complain if we do not point out the origins of the games, and we believe that CRASH readers do not live in a vacuum where other machines don't exist, and that they are interested to know. The Virgin Sorcerer was a profile on a person in general – it isn't a programmer that writes a game – it's a person.*

As to Sabre Wulf*, I would admit that it is easy sometimes to forget what a game costs (when you get to see it for free), but as the review in question says, the game had to be reviewed very quickly, and it seems to me that thousands of people have in general agreed with it. Had there been ratings on it (there wasn't time to do them sensibly as* Sabre Wulf *arrived three days before the issue went to press) they would have reflected the keys in use of computer.*

Perhaps this also answers **M. Antill of Walsall**, *who asked why* Sabre Wulf *was unrateable. On the subject of reviews, the next two writers have some suggestions. . .*
LM

HOW ABOUT

Dear Lloyd,
Just a few suggestions you might consider worthwhile putting in CRASH. 1) Identify the reviewers in the criticism of games; a simple set of initials will do with a key at the mag's beginning. 2) In the Hotline Charts, include the percentage of the vote next to each title, with the total number of votes cast recorded too. 3) How about a special all time top 50 chart in the Christmas Special? Top tens could also be voted for Best Graphics, Most Original etc. Perhaps a Worst Game or Most Overrated etc. 4) More interviews with programmers and Software Houses

Zoe Wilkinson, Huyton-with-Roby, Liverpool

Dear Lloyd,
I wish you would tell us who the reviewers of each review are under their comments. We could then believe what some reviewers say and take others with a pinch of salt. You did this earlier with Run it Again (bring it back), and it was helpful.

David Leece (15), Forest Hill, London SE23

Identifying the reviewers is something we considered at the very start of CRASH. At the time most other computer mags left their reviews uncredited; That has now changed considerably and there may be an editorial decision taken on whether CRASH will also credit reviews in the usual run of the magazine. I don't know whether I agree with David that it will help believe some and take others with a pinch of salt because games change rapidly, so do people and so therefore do their opinions, so whether you will be able to identify with a particular reviewer for very long is open to question. On top of that comes the fact that the majority of the CRASH reviewer pool are at school, not professional writers, and are therefore entitled to some anonymnity. We'll see.

As to the Hotline Charts, there is only a significant percentage of the vote figure for the top 12 to 15 games and it is a pointless waste of time and space to print all the percentages beside each title. With Zoe's other suggestions about an all time to 50, we are, of course, running the CRASH Readers Awards for 1984, which more or less covers the points.
LM

POPGRAMS

Dear Lloyd,
I want to know how many pop stars have made computer games. I've heard that Shakin' Stevens launched a game ages ago called *This Old House*. The Thompson Twins have made one too. As well as that I would like to know if there are any BMX games for the Spectrum.

Nicky McVinie, Edinburgh

I'm afraid I don't really know the answer to that question. There have been a number of singles with programs on the B side, but they haven't really come into our area. Perhaps other readers know? P.S.S. have a BMX game for the C64, which they are converting to the Spectrum shortly.
LM

OUT THROTTLE

Dear CRASH,
On reading your issue 7 I was amazed to see that your review on *Full Throttle* (can I say) was biased! I quote: 'Atari will have to pull their socks up to out throttle *Full Throttle!*'

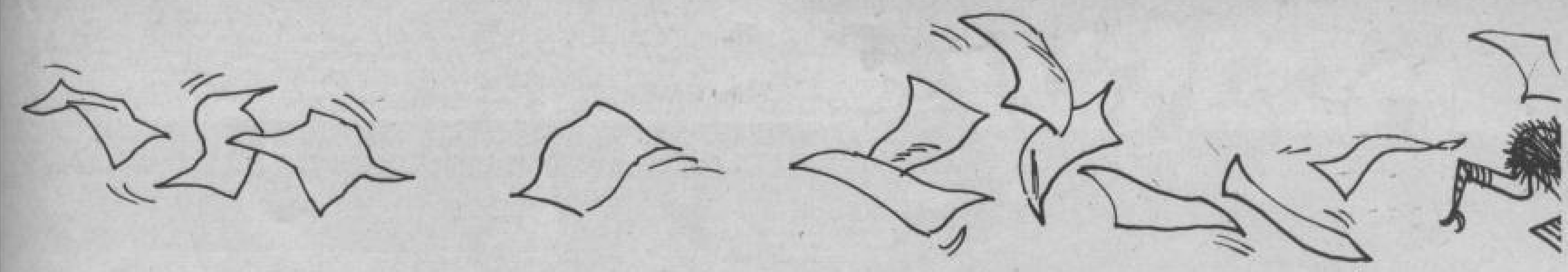
Is this true? I fear not! Full Throttle is a good game but I feel (as do many others) that it doesn't come up to the high standards imposed by *Pole Position* (after all, if we are honest, the Spectrum doesn't have the capability to produce such sophisticated graphic displays).

I own a 48K Spectrum myself, and would be the last person to downgrade a good game, but I feel that credit should only be given where it is due and not just to deceive the potential buyer!

C. Maddick, Newton Hall, Durham

I fear you have entirely missed the point of the statement in the Full Throttle *review. Quite obviously none of our reviewers is so isolated (even in li'll ol' Ludlow) as to have not seen or played Atari's* Pole Position *in the arcades, and not for one minute was anyone trying to suggest that* Full





Throttle's graphics matched those of a dedicated arcade machine, perhaps not even those of Atari's own games machine. The comparison was being made against Atarisoft's Spectrum version of Pole Position, *long awaited and barely glimpsed at the Earls Court Computer Fair before it was withdrawn after software reviewers had laughed it out of existence. We were merely saying (before seeing* Pole Position *by Atarisoft) that they would have to be damned good to make it look better than* Full Throttle.
LM

CRASHED OUT

Dear Lloyd,
I am in desperate need of help. I am sitting here my hands trembling with anxiety and my Spectrum buzzing evilly. What is the problem, you ask? It's as simple as this – I cannot play computer games. As my brother busily completes *Atic Atac* and *Sabre Wulf*, I am still struggling to free *Bugaboo* from the caves and meet the ghostrider in *Wheelie*. I cannot hope to do well in any of these games. Is it because my frail hands are undextrous? No, because I fail every time in



adventures as well – unable to get further than the trolls in *The Hobbit*, and getting killed on the fourth problem in *Espionage Island*. How do I fare at simulation games? Well I did manage to get the plane three feet off the runway in *Flight Sim*.

I do have a few talents, however – not many people can have achieved Ø% on *Sabre Wulf*, and the other day I almost got Horace across the road – when I say almost. . .

Anyway, at least I know what games to buy from reading CRASH – the colour photographs are priceless and the ratings indispensible. Thanks for a great mag, even if I can't play the games. . .

David Hayles, Uckfield, East Sussex

I know how you feel, David! In adventures I can never leave tasty looking red herring pie alone. But perhaps your real problem has nothing to do with a lack of games playing talent. Maybe it's your posture that's all wrong. Read on. . .
LM

SITTING STRAIGHT

Dear CRASH,
I believe that most games players realise and understand how regular games playing can damage your eyesight, causing eyestrain and soreness. They also know how items like monitors can be bought to prevent this problem.

However, not so many games playes do understand how regular games playing session can affect your back. Often back complaints are blamed on heavy outdoor work, but often this person is playing for two hours a day with a computer, and this can cause back ache, soreness or just stiffness.

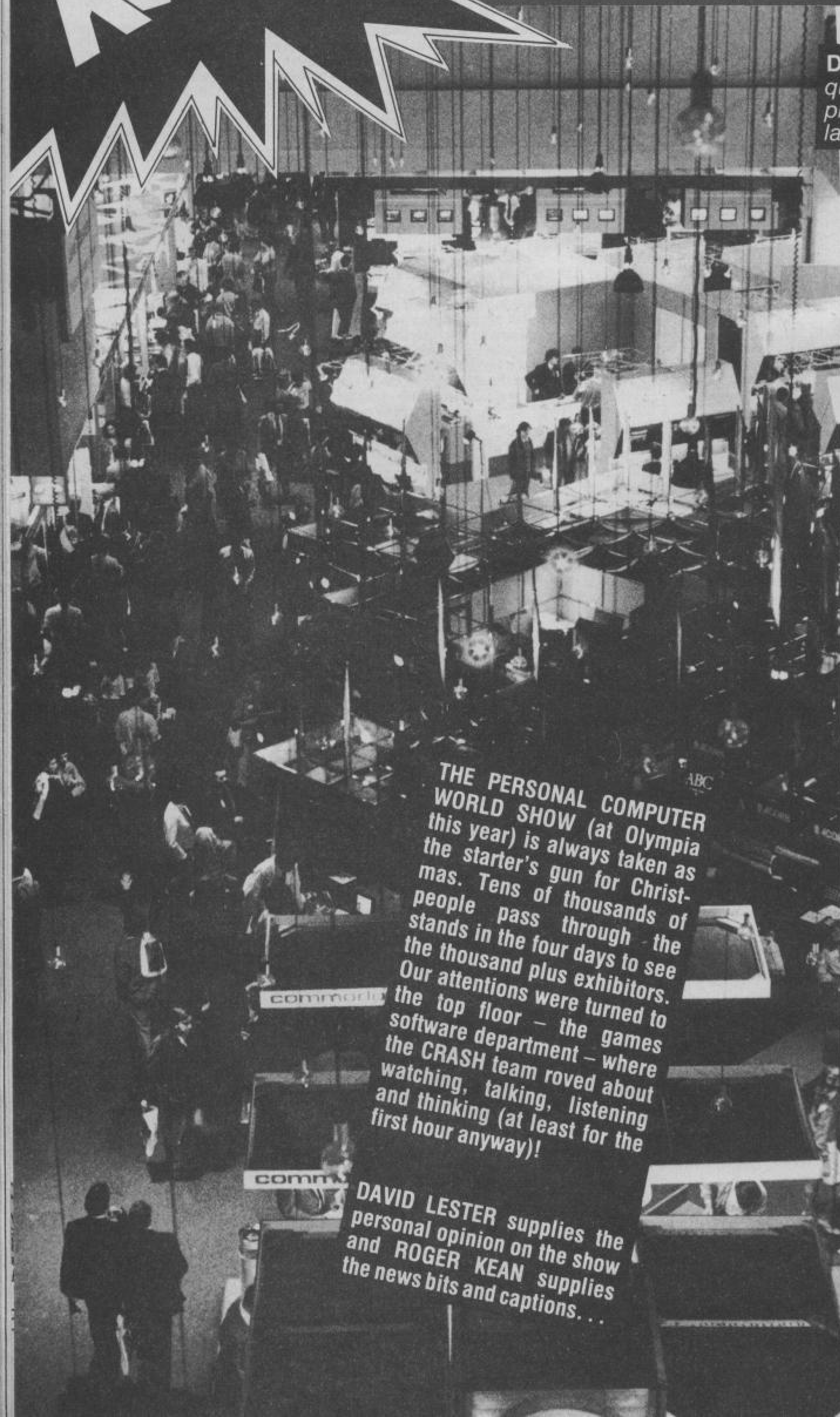
Happily for *Sabre Wulf* addicts, this problem is a lot easier and cheaper to overcome than buying a monitor. Just having a comfortable but firmly backed chair, and a table with plenty of leg room should provide an easy answer.

I hope this information is of use to those readers who have any of these problems.

F. Wainwright, Dewlish, Dorchester, Dorset.

Thank you doctor! If anyone else has suggestions, constructive comment on CRASH or would like a Lloyd Mangram pie in the face for impertinence, nice or nasty things to say about games or just a Cathy and Claire personal problem they would like to share confidentially with thousands of others, just write to me at the usual address. (Has anyone got ten pence for the tea machine. . .?

KERRASH! N·E·W·S



THE PERSONAL COMPUTER WORLD SHOW (at Olympia this year) is always taken as the starter's gun for Christmas. Tens of thousands of people pass through the stands in the four days to see the thousand plus exhibitors. Our attentions were turned to the top floor – the games software department – where the CRASH team roved about watching, talking, listening and thinking (at least for the first hour anyway)!

DAVID LESTER supplies the personal opinion on the show and ROGER KEAN supplies the news bits and captions. . .

David Lester, *takes a quick spin around the pre-PCW show launches...*

Well, the expected new software is now appearing in the run up to Christmas, with most of the well-known software houses releasing new games for the Spectrum.

Creative Sparks are releasing three new titles, two starring the cartoon character, Danger Mouse. The first of these is *Danger Mouse in Double Trouble,* which is an arcade game with several screens. It features some superb graphics, especially where Danger Mouse himself is concerned. *Danger Mouse in the Black Forest Chateau* (sic) is a junior adventure – meant as a sort of introduction to adventures for young children. While the adventure itself is quite easy, it is long, and uses some good graphic descriptions of each location.

The third new release from Creative Sparks is totally different. It is called *Delta Wing*, and is similar to *Fighter Pilot* – it's a cross between a flight simulator and an arcade game. The object is to destroy the enemy bases before they destroy yours. The graphics are very very realistic – you see a view of inside the aircraft cockpit, and you can even see the pilot's legs and arm moving the instruments when you move your joystick around! My only doubts about the game are that it is slightly too similar to *Fighter Pilot* to sell well – but presumably Creative Sparks think otherwise.

Powersoft have just released four new programs (no, you probably haven't heard of them; not only have they just launched the games, but they have also just launched their company! Good luck to them – they'll need it to survive the way things are at the moment). Trying to avoid the decision of whether to join the budget software bandwagon or to risk the full-price software market, they have opted for a mixture. The two main, full-price programs are *Billy Bluebottle* and *Catwalk*. *Billy Bluebottle* is another Manic Miner clone, although with fewer screens than most of its many rivals. *Catwalk* is an original arcade game, again with several screens, but has poor graphics and generally doesn't look set to astound anyone.

The budget software is slightly different, though. Instead of following Mastertronics and Atlantis precisely, Powersoft have chosen to release two games on one cassette, for £3.50. The games are respectable versions of 'Q-Bert' and 'Pengo'; a year ago they would have sold well at £5.95, but now they represent good value for money, assuming you want the two games.

I·N·P·U·T

Powersoft incorporate an interesting feature into their programs – the on-screen instructions and prompts are almost all in several different languages. this will make it easy for Powersoft to market its software abroad, and could even have some educational value for foreign language students in England.

Melbourne House have had an enviable reputation ever since *The Hobbit* was released, despite a number of rather poor programs (*HURG*, *Terrordactil*, and *Mugsy*). The long awaited *Sherlock Holmes* has at last arrived, and looks like reinforcing their good reputation. People expecting a repeat of the Hobbit but in different surroundings, might be disappointed – the graphics are very small, and hardly worth having (in fact there is an option to play without them). But having said that, the game is a step forward for adventures. Melbourne House's **Philip Mitchell**, who wrote the game, claims it is the hardest adventure on the market, and my initial attempts to solve it certainly back that up.

Within minutes of the first journalists arriving at its launch, the first bug was discovered – to go by train from London to Leatherhead in the game, you need to go from Kings Cross. As all Leatherhead readers no doubt know, in real life you need to take a train from Victoria or Charing Cross to get to Leatherhead. Oh well, that's what happens when a game about England is written by an Australian in Australia! Due to the complexity the adventure, Melbourne say that it's quite likely that other small bugs might exist – no doubt CRASH readers will find them fairly soon!!

Melbourne released *Hampstead* at the same time as *Sherlock*. *Hampstead* is also an adventure, developed on the Quill (although translated into plain machine code later). But it is different to most adventures, in that its purpose is to amuse people rather than provide a hard adventure. Indeed, the adventure is extremely simple, which the authors say is so that anyone can complete it, and so reap more enjoyment from it. the idea is to attain Hampstead – not just to go there, but to reach the social status required to be invited into other people's homes there! You start off on the dole, watching 3-2-1 (the worst imaginable state of affairs!) and have to use various dishonest means to attain Hampstead.

I like the idea of comic games, but there have been other, better comedies before (*Denis through the Drinking Glass*, and *Pimania* being just two examples – see later in this article for another), and most of the jokes in this are pretty unfunny. *Hampstead* can become yours for a modest £9.95.



Quicksilva have just unveiled their Autumn catalogue, with five new titles for the Spectrum. The most popular is likely to be *Zombie Zombie* – this is the long-awaited follow-up to **Sandy White's** *3D Ant Attack*. First impressions suggest that its graphics are every bit as good as the first, but the game has far better sound, and a different game-plot.

On a different note is *Blood and Guts*, which has you the player moving round inside a human body, searching for the parts to your escape ship while fighting off disease, tapeworm, and other such niceties!! The map of the rooms is an accurate representation of the human body, or so QS claim.

They are also releasing the official *Battlezone* game – but since there are already several good versions available, I can't see it doing too well. Another surprise is Eric Bristow's *Pro Darts*. Artic, Automata and now QS have all released darts programs, all of which seem to me to be a complete waste of time and money – if there is one thing that computers can't simulate well, it's darts. Still, it might be better than I fear.

And last, but by no means least, from QS, comes *Strontium Dog* (from an IPC comic) and the *Killing*. This fast action game involves you roaming the universe destroying evil. Hmm. I've heard that somewhere before, I think...

After extensive negotiations with Tharg, the hyper intelligent alien editor from the IPC comic 2000AD, Quicksilva is able to introduce a game based on the series Strontium Dog. The main character is Johnny Alpha, who goes around the universe destroying evil. 2000AD has a tenuous link with CRASH, since Terminal Man comic strip writer, Kelvin Gosnell, was one of the founding editors of 2000AD.



PCW Show report

by David Lester

I am sorry to have to start this report on the Personal Computer World Show by expressing my sorrow that it had so little to offer to Spectrum owners (unless they also happen to be Amstrad or Commodore owners...). Yes, this year the show seemed to have very little of interest to the old Spectrum owner. But, although the quantity left something to be desired, I would be hard-pressed to criticise the quality of all that there was.

One of the most important stands for games players must have been the Elite stand. Elite have just released their much-advertised Jet-Set Willy beater, Kokotoni Wilf. This, of course, was on display, and does look extremely impressive – although you will have to decide for yourselves whether or not it beats Jet-Set Willy!

Also a must for most people was the Domark stand. Domark is the company about to release **Eureka!** for which there is a £25,000 prize. Simple displays of the mamoth game(s) were there, but did not give away very much as to the nature, or quality, of the final product – suffice it to say that they did nothing to suppress any interest in it!!

Crystal Computing, or **Design Design** as they are now rather ostentatiously known, had their new game, **Dark Star** on show (see CRASH September for preview). While any one screen shot of this game is, as is so often the case, not all that impressive, the speed of the smoothly moving line graphics MUST be seen to be



believed – I have certainly never seen anything like it elsewhere. And what is more, the game itself looks worth having, too, which is not always the case.

Another name change. The Edge (formerly Softek) were showing off their so-called mega-games. Well, if this is the standard of Mega-game, then Imagine would have been lucky to sell one copy. Those games (**Psytraxx** and **Star Bike**) do have rather a lot of screens – but I would much prefer to have one tenth the number of screens (100 will do – I am not a fussy person, really!) but with each having some decent graphics. The Edge have thoughtfully provided a fast loader for the game, to save you time loading it, presumably. Well, it takes me over half an hour to load each game, due to the numerous loading errors I get from the fast loader bit; it would be much quicker to use the normal loading system, which does at least, work most of the time.

One product which is far less hyped, but far more worthy of it, though, is the follow up to **Automania** from **Mikro-Gen**, **Pyjamarama**. This is a true arcade adventure (yes, at last one does exist) and has some of the best graphics I have ever seen – including those in **Sabre Wulf**. The adventure is difficult, too, so I predict that this will be the

greatest success of any of the new releases for the Spectrum at the PCW show. Mikro-Gen also had their **Air Traffic Control** program available. This, although no doubt very good and realistic, does not appeal to me very much – it is just that little bit too technical and, to my way of thinking, tedious.

One of the attractions of press day was on the fifth floor, where **CDS** had two rooms. To promote their new program, they had got Steve Davis to demonstrate it; no guesses as to what the program is. Although the game is probably very good, I do not find the idea of snooker on a computer very appealing after playing on an actual snooker table – but then, not very many people have snooker tables near to hand. I think that the idea is to have the snooker program as a sequel to CDS's highly successful **POOL** program; I am afraid to say that I think the program is too similar to succeed as such, though, although Snooker is a very definite step forward. Or at least, it looks as if it is when Steve Davis is playing it!!

Melbourne House were proudly exhibiting what looks set to be the next Hobbit – **Sherlock Holmes**. The game certainly ought to equal the Hobbit, since it is written by the same author. The adventure does look good by any account, although the graphics leave a lot to be desired, and there are several known bugs already. They also had **Hampstead**, a new (or so Melbourne House seem to think) type of game which aims to make you laugh. Although not quite the same this is similar to any other text adventure written using the Quill; the difference is that Melbourne had it translated into different machine code, for their own reasons. This looks quite enjoyable, but is overpriced at £9.95.

Other than that, the Show provided nothing but disappointment. Among the guilty companies there with nothing of interest to show were Sinclair, (unless you count the QL as interesting); Ocean, who seem to have left the Spectrum behind in their rush to produce new Commodore 64 games; MC Lothlorien; K-Tel; Kempston; CRL Group PLC (!!); A and F, who don't seem to be doing much for anything at the moment; Anirog and ASP software. I can't see why most of these companies exhibited at the show, since their lack of good new titles or hardware can only harm their reputation (certainly in my view).

There were several notable absentees from the Show, this year, too. Probably most notable is Imagine, who were not there (as a company, anyway) for very obvious reason; other culprits were Software Projects; Mastertronics (except that they probably do not have sufficient margins to pay for a show like this) and some of the smaller names with new products, like Powersoft; Digital Integration; Durell; R and R; Atlantis, and PSS. Let's hope that, as the opposite to those who actually were at the show, their absence implies a very good product!! And let's hope, too, that next year's PCW show will not see another decline in Spectrum new products, but an increase.



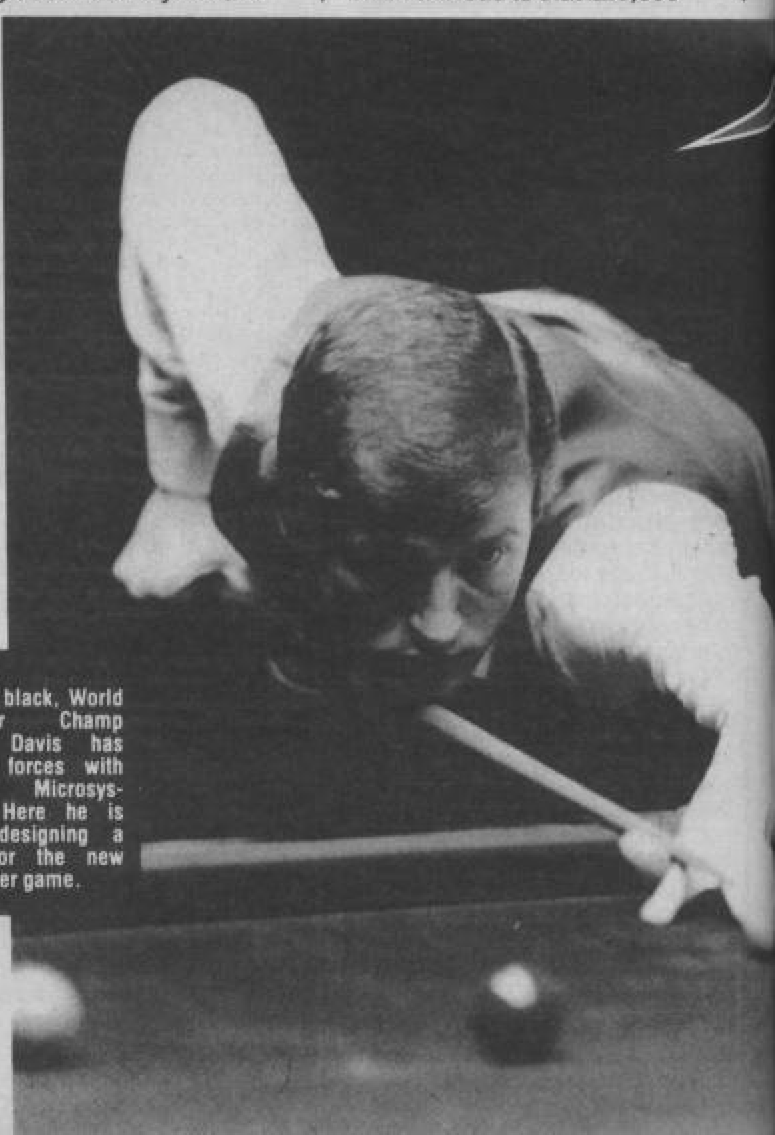
"Like that old man who stands in pointed hat Tensely watching, willing that Silence, when it comes, will favour white: Remembering the key to future life Exists within the glory of the night!" One of the cryptic clues in the booklet accompanying the new EUREKA! computer game from Domark. The quality of the colour illustrations for the game are of very high standard as this pic shows.

EUREKA!

DOMARK isn't a name that instantly springs to mind in connection with computer games, but their first game, *Eureka!* probably does. Maybe it's the exciting lure of the £25,000 prize, already deposited with a bank, that nuges the memory. *Eureka!* was launched at the PCW Show. It contains five adventures and five arcade games, a dangerous and mysterious trail through five different eras in history from the dinosaurs, to Rome, to King Arthur, Colditz and finally 1984. The object is to uncover all the clues that will lead to discovering the secret telephone number which will lead to that £25,000



A mini-Wally looks on dreamily at Mikro-Gen's new PYJAMARAMA game featuring Wally Week's nightmare.



Potting black, World Snooker Champ Steve Davis has joined forces with C.D.S. Microsystems. Here he is seen designing a shot for the new computer game.

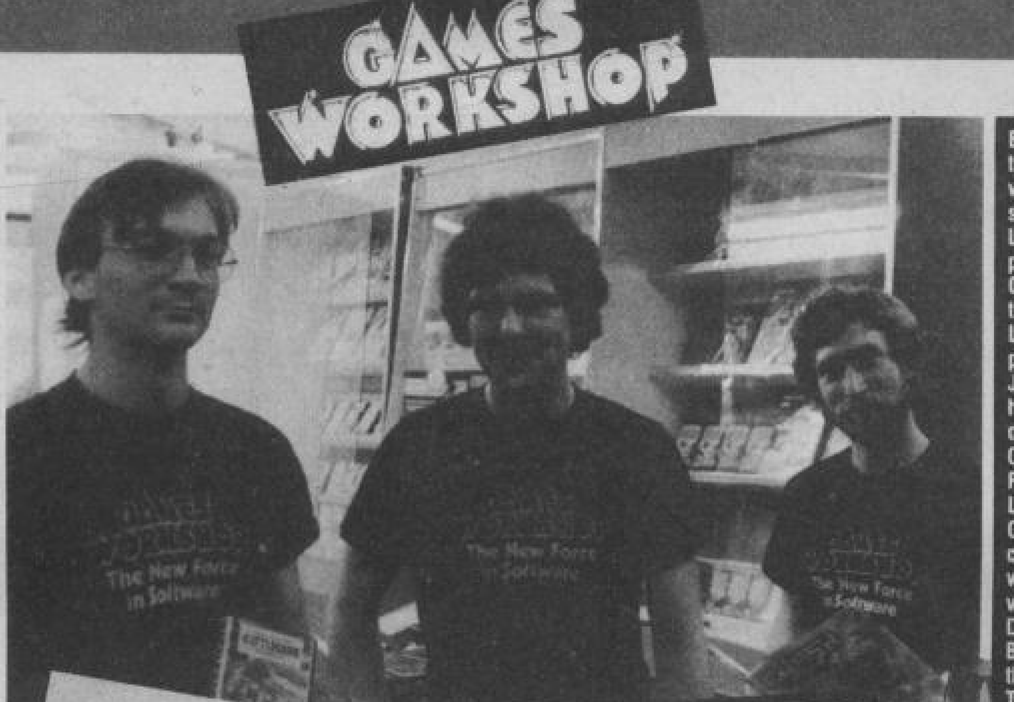
CHANNEL 8 WINNERS

CHANNEL 8 who market Brian Howarth's Mysterious Adventures ran a lucky draw at the PCW Show where five lucky people could win a set of all the games. Channel 8 are pleased to announce that the five winners are: G. Buck, Sittingbourne, Kent; J. P. Stoppard, Chesterfield, Derbyshire; J. Leah, Wimbledon, London; D. Chiles, Redcar, Cleveland; and A. Hunt, Walsall, West Midlands.

prize.

Eureka! is the brainchild of ad-men **Mark Strachan** and **Domonic Wheatley** (grandson of author dennis Wheatley). Mark and Domonic (Do-Mark) got **Ian Livingstone** (famous for the Fighting Fantasy Books and partner to Steve Jackson in Games Workshop) to write the story line, and from there the concept went behind the iron curtain where a team of Hungarian programmers were employed in great secrecy to write the games.

The idea behind *Eureka!* is that the game should be easy to play but very difficult to solve. Domark are at great pains to point out that despite the prize, *Eureka!* is also an excellent game to play, not just some cheap excuse. To prove the point, they say it took some 10,000 man hours of programming. The team of 20 included four graphic artists, 2 musicians, a professor of logic and an Oscar winning cartoonist! *Eureka!* costs £14.95 and, say Domark, it is expected to take at least 15 months to crack the riddle. If it hasn't been cracked by the 31st of December 1985 then the £25,000 will be split equally between all those who have purchased the game.



Barely yards from the Domark stand where Eureka! scenarist Ian Livingstone was present, was the Games Workshop team. Ian Livingstone's partner Steve Jackson (right) had his foot in plaster (a dragon nibbled it). On the left is Angus Ryall (our Front Liner) and Russell Clarke is in the centre. The team were showing the virtually assembled D-DAY, BATTLECARS and the adventure TOWER OF DESPAIR.







SNOOKERED

Steve Davis, the World's Number One player was quite a draw at PCW, and was to be seen in an upper room carefully lining up tricky shots on the Spectrum and Amstrad versions of the new C.D.S. Microsystems game, **Steve Davis Snooker**. It was nice to see how long it took him to line up his shots, nudging the cursor this way and that for an age until satisfied. The lined-up shot, incidentally, bounced off a cushion and went away as a foul – well even the greatest can slip up now and again with all that press attention.

PIRATES OF THE ZAXXONY COAST

Spectrum owners have long wanted a version of ZAXXON and had mixed feelings about STARZONE's version ZAXXAN. Now US GOLD has slapped a writ on Starzone having decided that ZAXXAN was a copy of ZAXXON, the game they have already released for the C64 and plan to release soon for the Spectrum. ZAXXON is licensed from Sega in the USA. Copies of Starzone's ZAXXAN have had to be withdrawn from retailers and an out of court settlement has been made whereby Starzone have paid US Gold based on the units already sold.



US GOLD was a popular stand, and no wonder with the games thay have planned. Some Spectrum ones include ZAXXON, F-15 STRIKE EAGLE, SOLO FLIGHT, STRIP POKER, FORT APOCALYPSE, BLUE MAX, BRUCE LEE



N·E·W·S I·N·P·U·T·



A pensive MATHEW UFFINDELL (CRASH reviewer) concentrates hard on someone's sales pitch – will it be a CRASH SMASH!

SILICON JOY

ANYONE wondering whether **Kevin Toms** was going to live for the rest of his life on FOOTBALL MANAGER might well be interested to hear about SILICON JOY. As the announcement that Kevin was handing over day to day responsibilities for ADDICTIVE GAMES to the company's finance director, John Croft, so that he could concentrate more on the creative side, came also the announcement that a new company had appeared. At the Addictive Games stand at the PCW Show, Kevin was looking very happy with his new project. Silicon Joy has three games virtually ready for release; GRAND PRIX MANAGER, a boxing game and TRIO – a three-in-one game including horse racing, a maze game and an arcade game. There is also a program called RUN YOUR OWN LEAGUE by request of *Football Manager* players, although the new program can be used to run a league table in any sport. We should be seeing all these programs very shortly.

ROMIK MISSING

One software house who was not at the PCW Show at Olympia was **Romik**. It seems they had designed and had built a distinctive stand to sit on one of the largest areas booked in at the show ready for a big product launch, but that show officials had informed them very late that there were structural limitations, which obviously the Romik stand exceeded. A spokesman for Romik said, 'It's really not satisfactory,' and suggested poor organisation on the part of PCW. Romik's new Spectrum game **Beatcha** is reviewed next month. Otherwise you'll have to buy some Weetabix to get their game **Weetabix versus the Titchies** which costs £3.75 from Weetabix or £2.75 to members of the Weetabix Club.

GHOSTBUSTERS

Activision has acquired the rights from Columbia Pictures to develop **Ghostbusters**, the comedy/horror movie, into software. The games are scheduled to arrive later this month, shortly before the release of the movie. Activision's UK Managing Director, Geoff Heath says, 'The film has had outstanding success in the States and we anticipate the software version of **Ghostbuster** to be No. 1 for the Christmas season.'

The Red Kipper Flies At Midnight

You get home one evening to discover a message on your answering machine. Something you'd thought hidden for good has reared its ugly head once again. **Valkyrie 17** is active again! So starts a hilarious new adventure game from a new outfit with the unlikely name of **The Ram Jam Corporation**. Reputed (or rumoured) to be an offshore shell corporation (with numbered Swiss accounts) and interest in South American arms dealing, British defence contracts and sponsoring the London Symphony Orchestra, Ram Jam has just got into the games market with **Valkyrie 17**, a paranoid look at the world of international espionage. The people responsible for the game are neurotically concerned to keep their names secret for fear of reprisals, but **Trevor Toms** and **George Stone** have been elected as whipping boys and came to visit the CRASH offices in the firm (and sensible) belief that no one here would be able to make head or tail of the game and so throw it in the bin before reviewing it. However a copy has gone off to Derek Brewster and we'll just see what he thinks. It had us in fits (it's the cyanide pills that do it).

The Ram Jam Corporation are being distributed by Palace Software (see photo caption) and **Peter Stone** (no relation to George) of Palace is probably the only living person to have met the highly secretive head of Ram Jam, the mysterious Sir Oswestry Malvinas. All we can safely say at this point in time, is that **Valkyrie 17** is an adventure with striking graphics, a poisonous sense of humour and enough red kippers to trip up Billingsgate fish market – oh and you get a nice badge to wear on your SS uniform (obligatory for serious players)

PALACE SOFTWARE TO DISTRIBUTE RAM JAM TITLES

It was smiles all round last week when executives of the Ram Jam Corporation met with representatives of Palace Software to clinch the deal whereby Palace will distribute all Ram Jam titles. After the signing, Pete Stone, Managing Director of Palace Software said "These blokes have been hanging around here for the last two weeks or so. I am glad to discover that they were on our side."

Sir Oswestry Malvinas (not in picture) said "Now that we have fulfilled our defence contracts, we are really looking forward to getting into games".





MAGRA BACK AGAIN

The long awaited **Wrath of Magra**, from Carnell is finally released through **Mastervision**, a division of Mastertronic. Derek Brewster's review can be found on the pages of Adventure Trail. Mastervision has also released another adventure called **Se-Kaa of Assiah** in which the player assumes the role of Se-Kaa in an attempt to liberate the world from the influence of a mutant race known as the Dark Hordes and reinstate the Wise Ones. **Magra** is £12.50 and **Se-Kaa** is £7.50.

More News Input on page 135

WIN £25,000 AND SAVE THE WORLD

Eureka!™

250 K OF PURE MYSTERY BY IAN LIVINGSTONE

■ 5 complete Adventures, each with its own Arcade, in one multi-load mega-program: "Eureka!" is *the* ultimate computer Epic.

■ Epic in scale: "Eureka!" spans five eras of history! You battle against the dinosaurs, outwit Nero and his gladiators, join the Knights of the Round Table, escape from Colditz, and finally into 1984 defeat the evil master of the Caribbean who is holding the world to ransom.

■ Epic in sheer size — there's more than 250K for you to get yourself killed in.



Spectrum 48K or Commodore 64 (Turboload)

Full-colour booklet, packed with cryptic clues to help you unravel the mystery — and win the £25,000 reward

Music and sound effects built in

5 PROGRAMS IN ONE

■ All 5 Adventures are linked — but you can choose to play them separately. And they all have REAL TIME built in. So if you don't think fast, you wind up as a pterodactyl's lunch, die of over-exertion in a Roman orgy, or just lose your mind...

■ "Eureka!" is not just an Epic — not just an Adventure. At the start of each historical era, you face an Arcade Action test, to decide your strength level for the Adventure to come.

■ The better your score, the stronger and faster you'll be.

■ And it'll keep you on your toes, with constantly-changing, static and moving graphics. Brilliant music and sound effects add to the excitement.

■ As part of the "Eureka!" pack, you receive a full-colour illustrated booklet, containing cryptic riddles and mysterious illustrations. Using booklet and screen *together*, you steadily unravel the clues and build up a secret phone number piece by piece.

■ If you're first to ring it, you save the world and collect the £25,000!

■ Quite a package! And to give everyone a fair chance, "Eureka!" will be released simultaneously worldwide on October 31st, 1984. No packs will be available until that date. All orders received by mail or phone by 26th OCTOBER will be despatched by post on the 31st right across the world. So order now, and be one of the first off the mark.

THEN THE RACE IS ON!!!



High quality, full-colour, static and moving graphics

Just clip the coupon. Or, for even faster action, order by Credit Card on the "Eureka!" Telephone Hotline 01-460 6000.

Eureka!™



DEVISED BY IAN LIVINGSTONE

The storylines for "Eureka!" are by Ian Livingstone, whose "Fighting Fantasy" books have sold over 2,000,000 copies. He's dreamed up some rather nasty tricks and twists for you in this Epic, because he has also devised the cryptic clues and conundrums in the booklet that goes with the program. He's the one who knows the answers.

"Eureka!" was programmed by Andromeda teams led by Hungarians Donát Kiss and András Császár. It took the equivalent of 5 YEARS to create, and the skills of 4 graphic artists, 2 musicians and a professor of logic too. We told them to stretch the hardware's capabilities, and make sure you were kept awake for hours!! They've done it...

£7 BONUS

When you order "EUREKA!" before 26 OCTOBER 1984, you receive an additional bonus: £7 voucher off the price of the **TROJAN LIGHT PEN** from PSL MARKETING. Normal price is £17.25. You buy it for just £10.25.

Send your order now to:
"Eureka!", FREEPOST, Dept 400, Mount Farm, Milton Keynes, MK1 1HQ

NO STAMP NEEDED

To: "Eureka!", FREEPOST, Dept 400, Mount Farm, Milton Keynes, MK1 1HQ

DOMARK

Please send me "Eureka!" packs, complete with cassette, full-colour booklet, instructions and rules, at **£14.95** each PLUS 55p post & packing. If my order is received before 26 October 1984, I will receive a free £7 voucher towards a Trojan light pen. Please allow 14 days delivery for orders received after 26 October.

MY COMPUTER IS	No. Ordered	Total at £15.50
COMMODORE 64		
SPECTRUM 48K		
	TOTAL £	

24 HOUR PHONE HOTLINE NUMBER
01-460 6000
For Credit Card Orders

I enclose payment by cheque/P.O. payable to DOMARK LTD.

OR Please charge my Credit Card VISA ☐ ACCESS ☐ AMEX ☐

Card Number

Expiry Date ______ Date ______

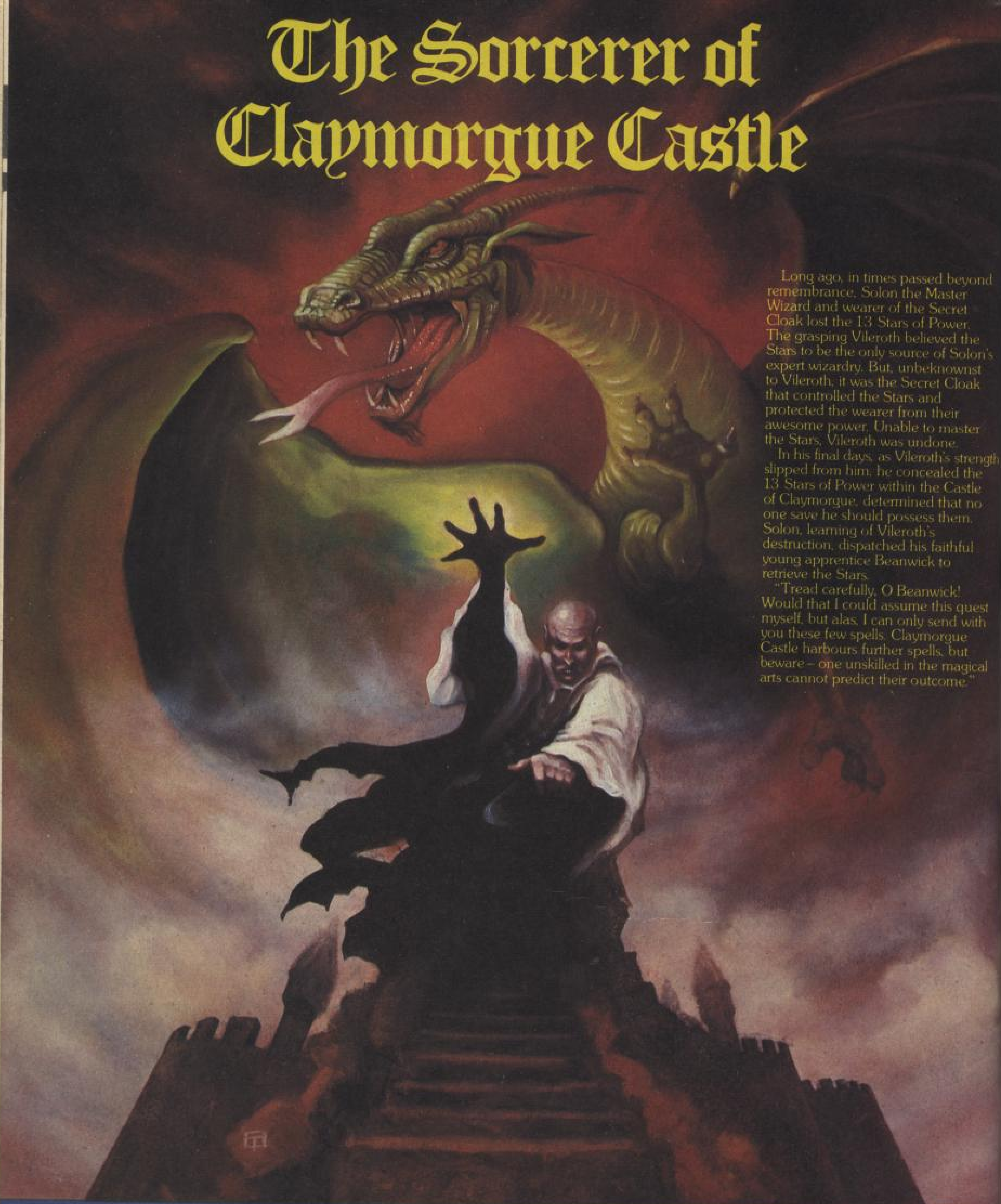
Name ______ Signature ______

Street ______

Town ______ Post Code ______ C

The race for the £25,000 starts on 31 Oct 1984 and closes on 31 Dec 1985.

Domark Ltd., 228 Munster Road, London SW6. Reg. No: 1804186 (England).



The long awaited new Graphic Adventure by Scott Adams

Adventure INTERNATIONAL™

119, JOHN BRIGHT STREET, BIRMINGHAM B1 1BE
Telephone: **021-643 5102**

The Sorcerer of Claymorgue Castle
is available now on cassette for:

*SPECTRUM 48K	£9.95	and on disc for:	
*COMMODORE 64	£9.95		
BBC MODEL B	£7.95	*COMMODORE 64	£13.95
ELECTRON	£7.95	*ATARI 48K	£17.95
DRAGON 32	£7.95	*APPLE 48K	£17.95
TANDY COLOUR	£7.95	TRS 80	£13.95
ATARI 32K	£9.95		
TRS 80	£9.95	*with graphics	

Dealer and Distributor Enquiries Welcome.

FAST ACTION FOR YOUR SPECTRUM

Can your computer hold out?



STAGECOACH

A western action game for your Spectrum which really does provide something quite different and exciting.
You are Kidd Rivers, the hero of the game and you must leap aboard the runaway stage and guide it safely over the plains and through the treacherous mountains. Then just as you thought you were safe, fight off the attacking Indians.



BLACK HAWK

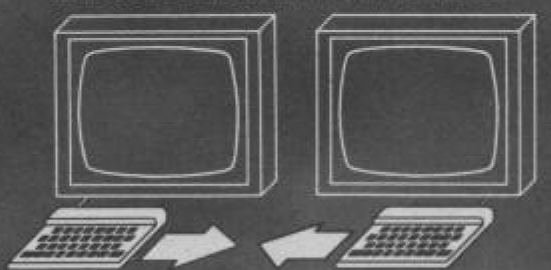
You're flying the world's deadliest aircraft, however it would appear that your Command Centre has just sent you on the world's deadliest mission.
The ultimate in strategic action. This 100% machine code game offers the player two full graphic scrolling screens with over 30 levels of play.



DELTA WING

Delta Wing is an advanced flight combat simulator. It has been designed to give an excellent 'feel' for the tumble and roll of high speed flight. With 15 separate controls to monitor and incoming enemy planes to be dealt with, this program takes you and your Spectrum to the limits.
Delta Wing also allows TWO Spectrum computers to play against each other through the use of two Interface 1's.

MACHINE AGAINST MACHINE



CREATIVE SPARKS

Available from
All good computer software stockists.

Send me (tick as required)

☐ **DELTA WING**	TNCC191	**£6.95**
☐ **BLACK HAWK**	TNCC11	**£6.95**
☐ **STAGECOACH**	TNCC181	**£6.95**

☐ My local stockist's address
☐ Your full list of games

Game/s at **£6.95** each	£ :	p
+ single P&P sum	:	30p
Total to send	£ :	p

Method of payment
By cheque or PO (no cash) made payable to **TECS**

☐ By Access
☐ Barclaycard

Enter card no.

Sign below:

Credit card sales: UK buyers only.
Response within 21 days.

Creative Sparks,
Department MO,
296 Farnborough Road,
Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 7NF.
Telephone: (0252) 518364.

Name

Address

CII.84

Travel with...

Trashman

Now Trashman is a great British success he's ready for international stardom – and you can help him on his way around the world. Our hero has the tall order task of cleaning up every major litter spot around the globe. Scooping up flowers thrown into the bull ring by matador fans in Spain, collecting the tissues of the faithful as they sob by Jerusalem's Wailing Wall, picking up coconuts from a palm beach in Samoa and collecting the empties at the German beer festival (Trashman still likes his tipple!) are just some of the challenges that make up Trashman's task.

Of course, your skill can help our hilarious hero to complete the necessary litter collection at every location, so he can earn the money to fly on to the next country in his round the world quest. And as he visits every continent on Earth in search of rubbish you can share every fun filled, thrill packed second with him.

Travel with Trashman has one or two player scoring, Hall of Fame and is compatible with Kempston, Sinclair Interface 2, Protek or equivalent joysticks. Available for the 48K Spectrum today from most good computer stores for just **£5.95.**

TRAVEL WITH TRASHMAN. AUTHOR – MALCOLM EVANS

In the shops from October 19th

Selected titles of New Generation Software are available from your local computer store and larger branches of:

WHSMITH · John Menzies · WOOLWORTH · Spectrum · Boots

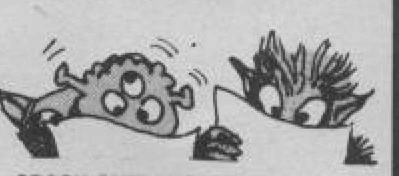

VFG 669Y
New Generation Software
FREEPOST
Bath BA2 4TD
Tel: 0225 316924
GSH
Guild of Software Houses
New Generation products are sold according to their terms of trade and conditions of sale.

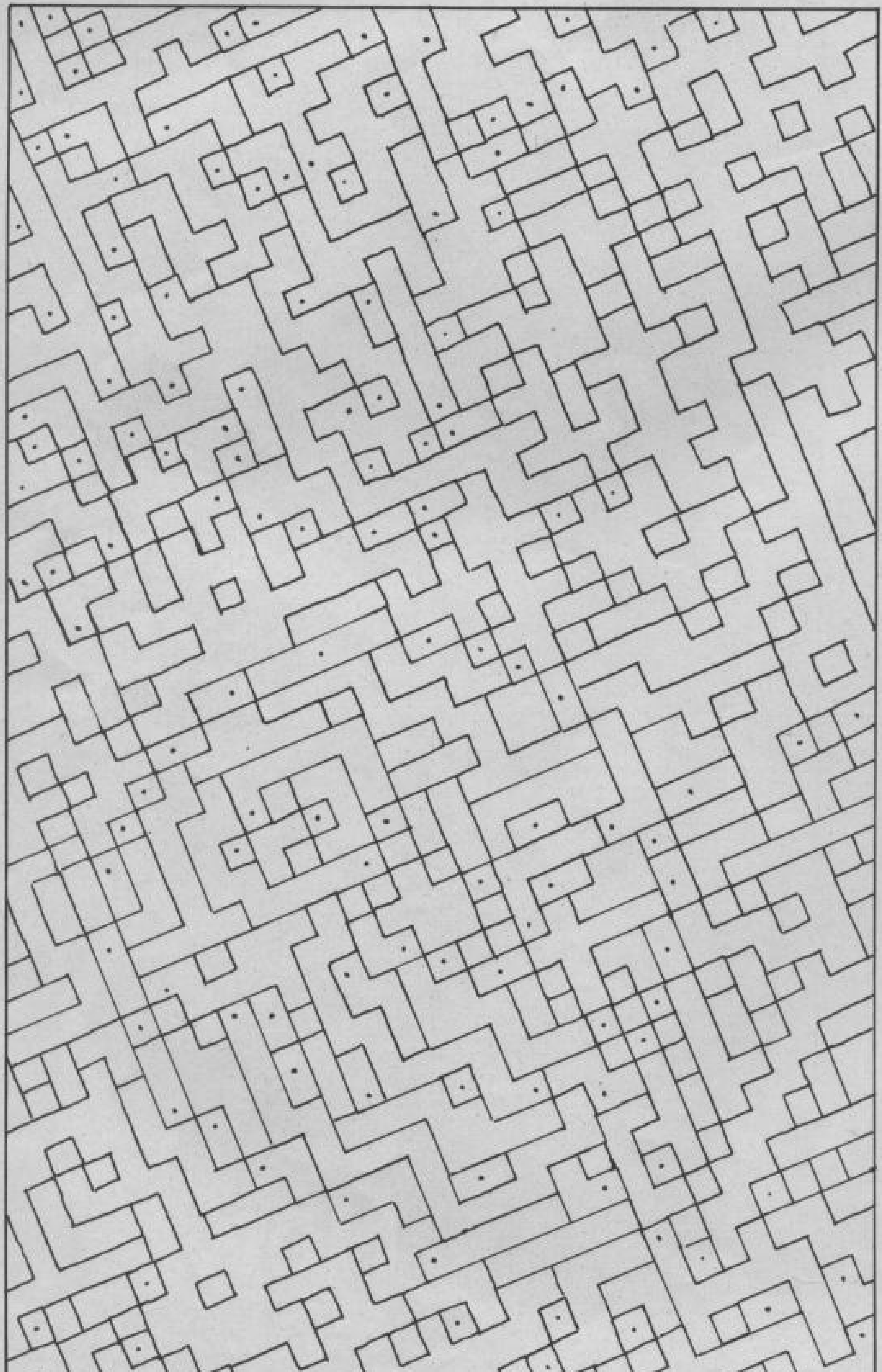
CRASH

THE MONTHLY CRASH QUIZ

THE MONTHLY CRASH QUIZ

Crazy Blocks! Just shade in the areas marked with a dot, leaving the undotted areas blank. A picture will emerge of an arcade game hero. Who is it? Write down the answer on a postcard please, and send it in to THE CRASH QUIZ, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB, to arrive by first post November 22. The first three correct entries drawn from the bag will each receive £25 worth of software, and the three runners-up will each receive a CRASH T-shirt. How generous can you get?!





CRASH QUIZ ANSWERS

As you may have noticed, there was no Crash Quiz last month. Here are the answers to competitions in issues 8 and 9.

Rapscallion Competition (8)

1. Wilderness, Magic Labyrinth and the Castle
2. Magic eye
3. A bird or a fly
4. Teletext
5. 595 (7 times 85)
6. You could have picked from; Manic Miner, Styx, Pool, General Election, Antics, Birds & Bees, Cavern Fighter, Aquarius, The Castle – and there are still others!

Gilsoft Gold Competition (8)

1. A French Island prison
2. A tasty pie
3. Mindbender
4. An hotel
5. Mr. Robinson
6. 9
7. Rescue a princess
8. A machine
9. Tuyria
10. It all takes place within the confines of an aeroplane

Dollar Soft Competition (9)

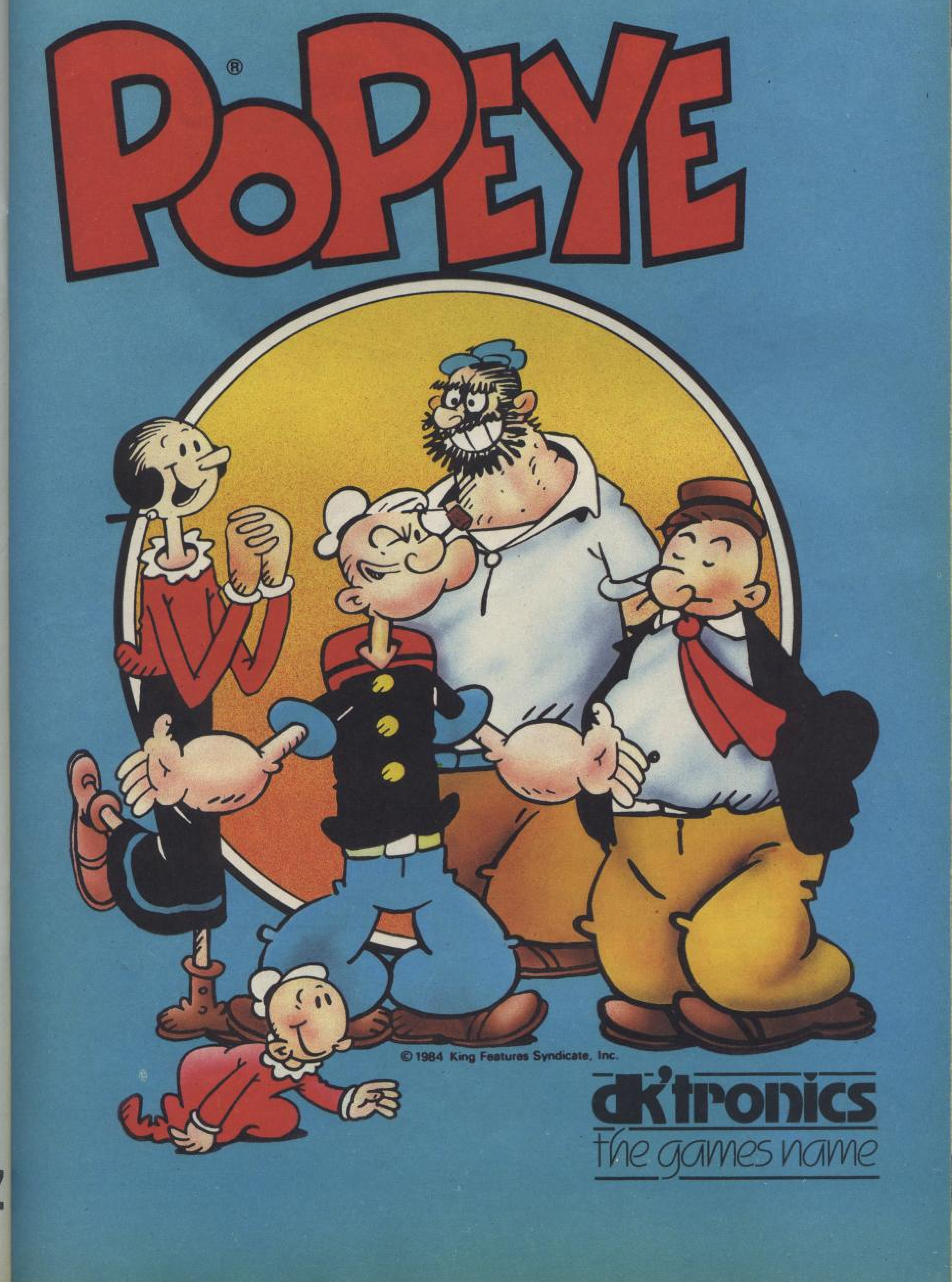
1. Warp Tunnel
2. 4 keys
3. Gremlin Graphics – Arthur Scargill
4. Sheffield
5. CRASH Magazine
6. 1969

Results of the September Crash Quiz

The three winners of the Spot the Difference (mirror) quiz are **Christopher Beck**, Rotherham; **Richard Brothers**, Letchworth, Herts; and **Neil Love**, Sutton Heights, Telford. They each receive £25 worth of software. The three runners-up, who each get a T-shirt, are; **Chris Calvert**, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria; **Stephen Fenton**, Keighley, Yorks; and **Malcolm Dixon**, Cheshunt, Waltham Cross, Herts.

Results of the August Crash Quiz

The answer of course, was **SCUBA DIVE** and the three winners are; **Mr. D. Levett**, Bromley, Kent; **Paul Rogerson**, Beauchief, Sheffield; **D. Moxham**, Swiss Cottage, London NW6. They each recieve £25 worth of software. And the runners-up who each receive a T-shirt are; **Stephen Hammond**, Gravesend, Kent, **Permjit Jhooti**, Preston, Lancashire; and **A. Craig**, Glasgow.


POPEYE®
© 1984 King Features Syndicate, Inc.
dk'tronics
the games name

TURBO CHARGE YOUR SPECTRUM



Outperforms any Spectrum interface

The unique Turbo interface from Ram gives you all these features – and more – in one unit:

* A variety of interfaces including: Rom cartridges, two 9-way D plugs for standard joysticks, PLUS full expansion bus at rear.
* Compatible with Kempston and Protek protocols.
* Works with latest Quickshot Mk II auto rapid-fire joysticks!
* Choice of Rom cartridge or tape cassette software.
* Instant program loading with cartridge software.
* Built-in power safety device – unique to Ram Turbo.
* Full one year guarantee.
* Immediate availability – 24 Hr despatch on receipt of P.O./credit card details (cheques – seven days).
* Incredible value – only £22.95.

So don't wait around – simply complete the coupon and send it to us today.

Or call our credit card hot line on 02514 25252. (Access and Visa welcome).

Ram Electronics (Fleet) Ltd, 106 Fleet Road, Fleet, Hampshire GU13 8PA.

24 Hr despatch for credit cards and postal orders

Please send me:

_______ Spectrum Turbo Interface(s) at £22.95 + £1 p+p (overseas orders £3 p+p)

_______ Quickshot II Joystick(s) at £9.95 (Only when purchased with Turbo – normally £12.95 + £1 p+p)

I enclose cheque/postal order or charge my Access/Visa for: £_______

VISA

Name_______

Address_______

_______ Tel_______

To: Ram Electronics (Fleet) Ltd, 106 Fleet Road, Fleet, Hampshire GU13 8PA. CM11

RAM TURBO

Trade and export enquiries welcome.


SPACE
Professor
He'll test your brain to its limits....
The Space Professor will stretch your powers of calculation and concentration. Can you prove your genius and beat him at his own game?
This arcade style mind bender is an exciting, educational 'noise stopper' for 5 year olds, but still a tough challenge to the most advanced A-level mathematician.
Space Professor has 2 screens, 3 levels of play, 3 speeds, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division options. It also offers a choice between keyboard and joystick player control.
Any Spectrum
Only £5.95 including VAT
FRONT Runner
Meet the Challenge
Available from your favourite Software Retailer.
GB-23

T·H·E L·E·G·E·N·D O·F A·V·A·L·O·N

THE LEGEND OF AVALON

Producer: **Hewson Consultants**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Steve Turner**

'Congratulations', says the inlay, 'You are now the proud owner of Avalon, the first in a new world of computer games, the Adventure Movie.'

It's, likely that in the next few months the words ADVENTURE MOVIE are going to become familiar. It hasn't happened overnight, of course, there has been a slow progression towards the interactive adventure which uses arcade style graphics (starting perhaps with games like *Atic Atac*) and which progress is now accelerating. History will dictate who is first, but Hewson have certainly made a head start with *Avalon*.

The packaging is small video box style with a large inlay containing columns of apparently daunting text. In fact the game turns out to be one of those you can dive into immediately, but reading the instructions would serve a useful purpose as this is, primarily, an adventure and few things are instantly obvious. Also included is an explorer's map of the Avalon complex and a protection entry code with very pale blue ink on slightly paler paper to make it hard for photocopiers. It asks you to type in three separate codes before accepting access.

You play Maroc (the wizard) or rather his astral projection. There are sixteen ranks (skills) which are subdivided into eight stages, and at the start of a new game your status is the lowest, that of apprentice. Your advancement is gained by penetrating deeper into the dungeons and by collecting spells.

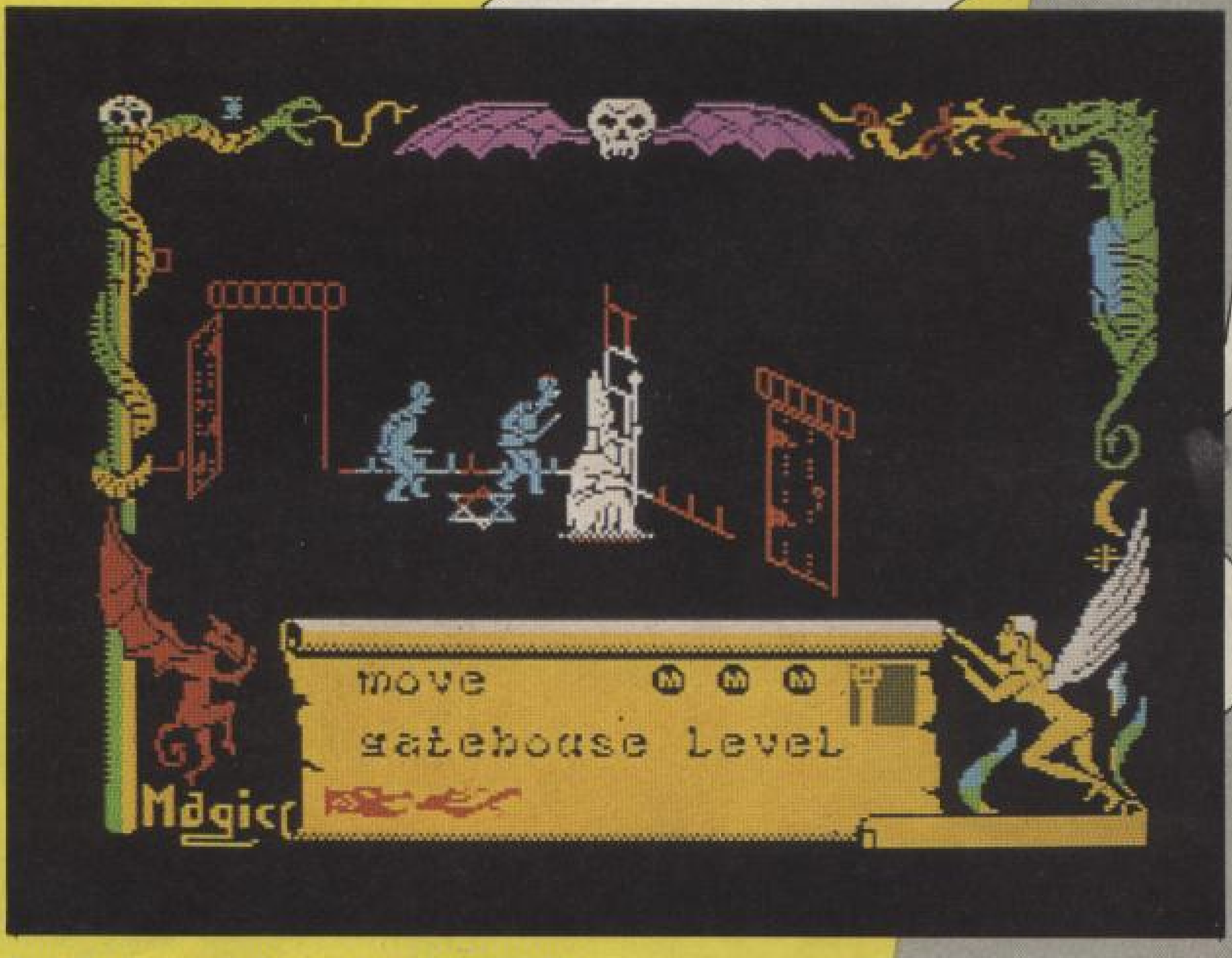
Maroc's task, to put is simply, is to destroy the Lord of Chaos, who dwells in the deepest part of the dungeons, protected by several types of horror. These include goblin warriors, who gang up on you and can only be avoided by running quickly through two rooms or down a tunnel; wraiths who throw fire balls at you after a while and tend to follow your progress by materialising through walls; guardians of chaos, and finally warlocks, who may be helpful and may not, depending on what you can offer them.

To help in this enormous task there are many spells and useful objects to be found, some are collected just by walking over them, but others may need the help of a servant (one of the early spells to be found), who can do the task for you. Movement itself is a spell, since Maroc is only an astral projection, and this is given to you at the start of the game. Collected spells are listed in a continous scroll at the base of the screen and are selected by using the up-down control and fire. Some spells can be used simultaneously such as 'move' and 'unseen'. A useful one is 'freeze', which stops time for a few moments and can let you get away from things like the goblin warriors. Here, an arcade skill comes in – the ability to get out of the freeze spell and into 'move' as fast as possible!

All the rooms have some doors which may be open, closed or locked. The locked ones obviously require keys. Closed ones are operated by taking Maroc to the door at the correct height and nudging it, moving back slightly to let it open before proceeding through it. They shut just as easily.

Because of its arcade overtones, *Avalon* is reviewed here as an arcade game rather than by Derek Brewster, but no doubt Derek will also have something to say on the subject at a later date.

Maroc pursued by goblin warriors



CRITICISM

● 'This is the best thing I've seen in arcade/adventures with the mystic qualities of adventures and the graphics of arcade. *Avalon* is the best blend between the two yet. The 3D effect is excellent (though a little jerky, but who cares when it is this good)? Overall, there is a lot to do in the game which means that interest will be held. I would personally recommend that a map be drawn to aid progress as I soon became lost without one. I think Hewson have produced a likely adventure cult game.'

● *'What makes* Avalon *a real interactive game is the fact that as you play it, you really alter the state of things with each 'life'. The spells you managed to collect last time are still with you, chests opened are still open, and as you carry on failing, more goblins and then guardians appear from the depths as though alerted to your presence. So the only way to go about it, is to use the first few attempts as a practice mode until you get the hang of opening doors proficiently and using spells. And the further you get into the game, the more you realise that this isn't really an arcade game at all, although some skills are needed, because you really can affect the way things happen to you. There are so many neat touches, most of which only appear with long play. Once I waited in the start room and a wraith appeared. The first fireball he threw was not at me but at the door – he shut it!* With so much budget software, around it seems to be harder to award value for money to a game costing £8, but Avalon *is worth every penny in my book* – no game like this could be developed at a cheap price.'

● *'Avalon* is a game that never ends. If you sink to the lowest

level, it still keeps going and you are forced to live with the effects of what you have done on previous attempts. In this sense there is every chance of picking yourself up again and continuing to get better. Useful, therefore to have the SAVE and LOAD facility. The 3D graphics are most effective, although at first it can be disorienting to go up through a door and emerge in the next room sideways. This reorientation also means a map is pretty essential – there is a freez key. I like the use of the joystick driven control which does both for movement and for spell selection, and life can get very panicky when there are three goblins and a wraith chasing you and you want to use spells and move. Highly addictive, extremely playable and a game to keep the attention for ages. *Avalon* is going to take a lot to master and, with as far as I have got, looks like having much more to it than even *Atic Atac*. It's got great music as well – pity there's not more of it!'

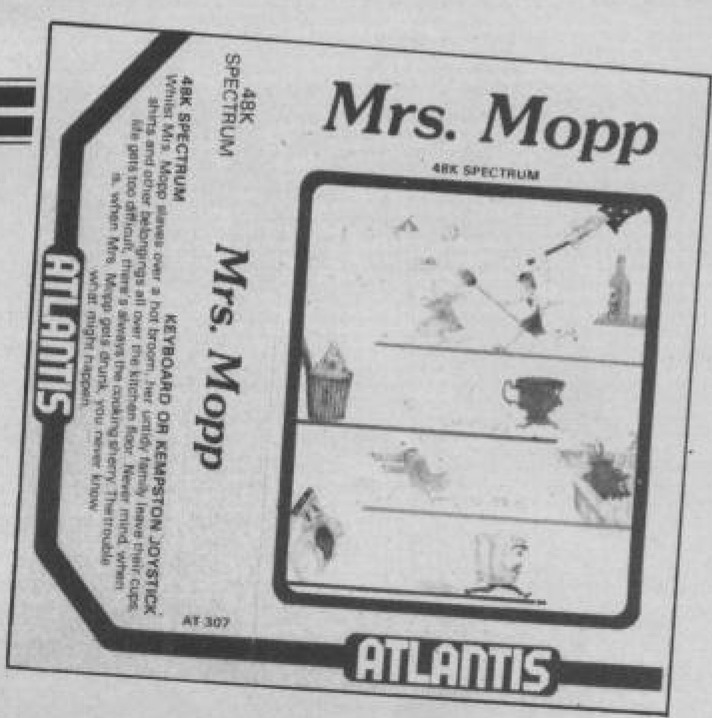
COMMENTS

Control keys: A to G = up, Z to V = down, B, N = left, M, SYM SHIFT = right, H, J, K, L = fire
Joystick: Kempston, Sinclair, AGF, Protek
Keyboard play: several options and positive response
Use of colour: borders very colourful, the playing area is quite simple and avoids messy attribute problems
Graphics: excellent 3D effect and well drawn and detailed characters
Sound: good start tune, otherwise useful sounds as warnings
Skill levels: not applicable
Lives: not applicable
Screens: over 200 rooms
General rating: excellent.

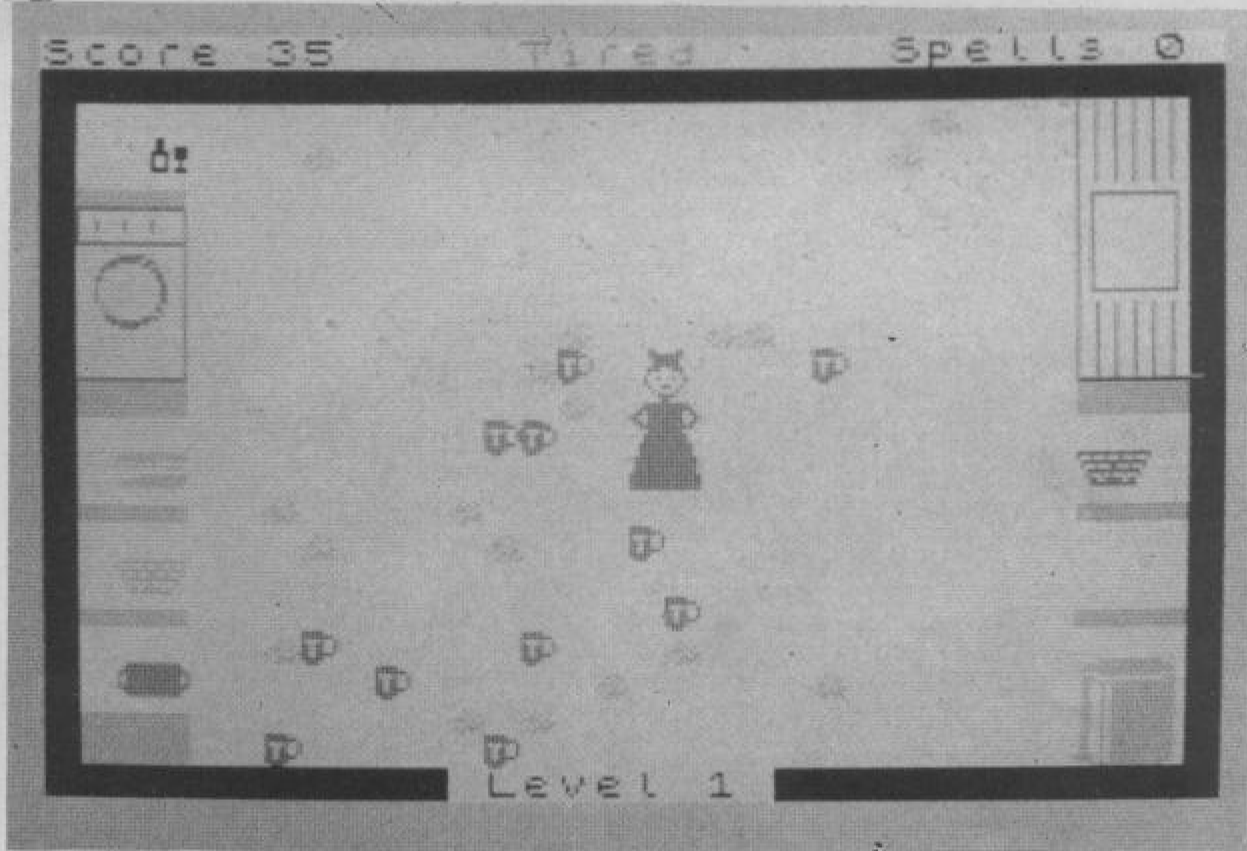
Use of computer	89%
Graphics	94%
Playability	91%
Getting started	90%
Addictive qualities	93%
Value for money	90%
Overall	91%

MRS. MOPP

Producer: **Atlantis**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Tina Billet**



Mrs. Mopp takes a second bow in the pages of CRASH as we reviewed it in our very first issue when it was originally marketed under Computasolve at the price of £5.50. As re-released by Atlantis, nothing has changed in the program and so our review in February still stands. But for those who never saw the issue, here is a brief summary.



Mrs. Mopp stars in her own vehicle as the house proud Haus Frau, a stirring computer game of everyday mess.

Mrs. Mopp's family is one of the messiest in the world – they litter cups clothes, dust and lord knows what else all over her kitchen. Moppsie has five utensils to help her in the task of cleaning up, two types of basket, a dustpan and brush and two trays. Each utensil is colour coded and can only be used to clear up specific items. The blue cups, for instance, may only be collected on the blue tray and the pale green clothes in the pale green basket. There's also a washing machine, a sink and dustbin. Each utensil will only hold so much and must be emptied periodically into the appropriate appliance. She can only hold one utensil a time and these are stored on shelves to either side. Litter starts appearing all over the place as soon as each game commenses, and as she cannot move past or over an object unless carrying the specific utensil for collecting it, the moveable floor space quickly becomes very restricted. When life becomes too unbearable there is a bottle of tipple to help restore her spirits, but beware of taking too much.

The reviewers comments added up to *Mrs. Mopp* being a good game, original in concept, medium addictive and very playable. The value for money at the time was given as 71% and obviously at £1.99 that is considerably increased, although it should be said that since its release, the standards of software have risen somewhat, which modifies its increase in value.

COMMENTS

Control keys: A/Z up/down, N/M left/right and S for spells
Joystick: Kempston
Keyboard play: sensible positions, 8-directional, responsive
Use of colour: good
Graphics: good, well compiled
Sound: fairly good
Skill levels: 1
Lives: 1
General rating: good.

Use of computer	65%
Graphics	69%
Playability	75%
Getting started	65%
Addictive qualities	68%
Value for money	79%
Overall	70%

DEUS EX MACHINA

Producer: Automata UK
Memory required: 48K
Retail price: £15
Language: machine code

HELLO. I WANT YOU TO PAUSE AFTER I COUNT YOU DOWN, AND RECOMMENCE PLAYING AT THE SCREEN'S REQUEST! FIVE - FOUR - THREE - TWO - ONE - PAUSE!

Tuesday evening, after tea and compulsory prayers, the last mouse tried to hide from Mankind, inside the Machine. Just before it died, as the nerve-gas eased its sphincter, the last mouse dropping caused a slight accident. You may control the progress of this Accident, on my behalf, and with my permission, and lead it up the telepath.

So starts a game which can only be described as different. What makes it different is the game idea in which you control the progress of an accident as it grows, learns and develops into a human being and eventually dies. Throughout the game you are given a percentage score which gets higher and lower as the game proceeds. *Deus Ex Machina* is unique, as much of a milestone in computer history as *The Hobbit* with its graphics, because this game has a synchronised sound track! The cassette case, which is large contains two tapes. One is the computer game – two games, one on each side – and the other is the sound track, also on either side. The sound track, once synchronised, plays all the while the computer program is running.

The sound is of very high quality and stars Ian Dury, Jon Pertwee, Donna Bailey, Frankie Howerd, Edward Thompson and Mel Croucher *(Mel Croucher?)*. In addition there is music with a distinctly Automata-ish feel to it, but it is definitely more serious in tone than usual.

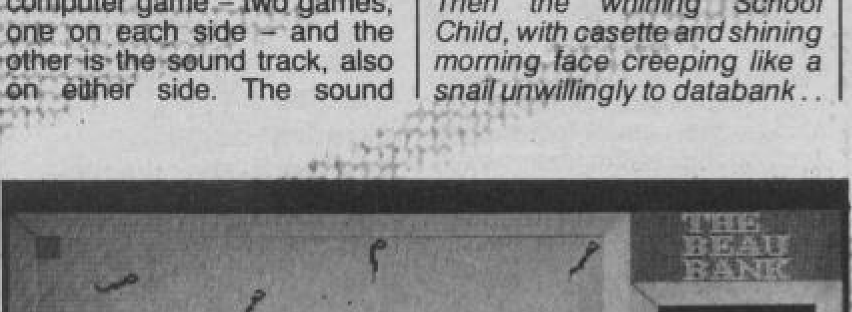
The game is not fun in the usual sense, it's more of an experience! Next follows a brief description of each of the stages in the game.

All the screen's a stage and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances, and one person in their time plays many parts, their act being seven ages.

At first the infant mewling in test tube's neck . . .

This stage of life consists of seven sub-games inwhich you help to create a baby (it's okay, all quite tastefully done – well, fairly anyway). The machine (the central controlling force of the UK), which rebels after witnessing the accident (which is wonderfully animated) does mostof the work by stealing an egg. The graphics are quite good here, as all the time the Defect Police (Frankie Howerd) are out to get you because you are a defect, as was the mouse.

Then the whining School Child, with casette and shining morning face creeping like a snail unwillingly to databank . .



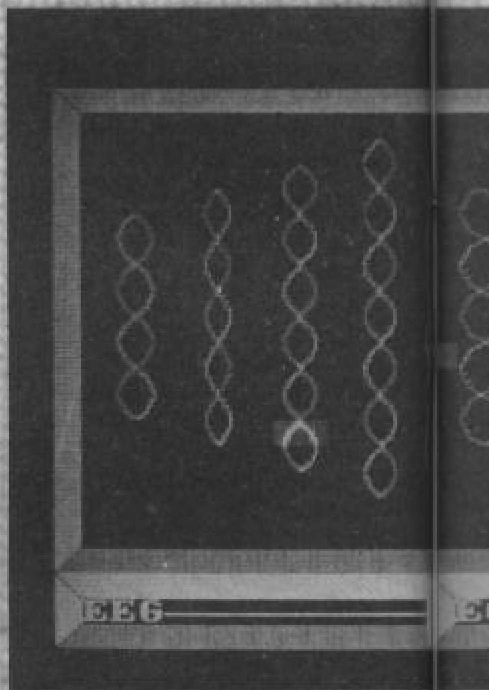
This stage consists of only one game in which the Defect Police must track you, for that is their function. When you are caught, you use your powers to parry their psycho-probes. Throw up your shield, move it clockwise and anti-clockwise to protect your entombed and revolving form. The graphics are interesting and work especially well on 'yourself'. This part is awe-inspiring and the sound track, as ever, is well-performed.

And then the Lover, sighing like a furnace, with a woeful video made to their lover's hologram . . .

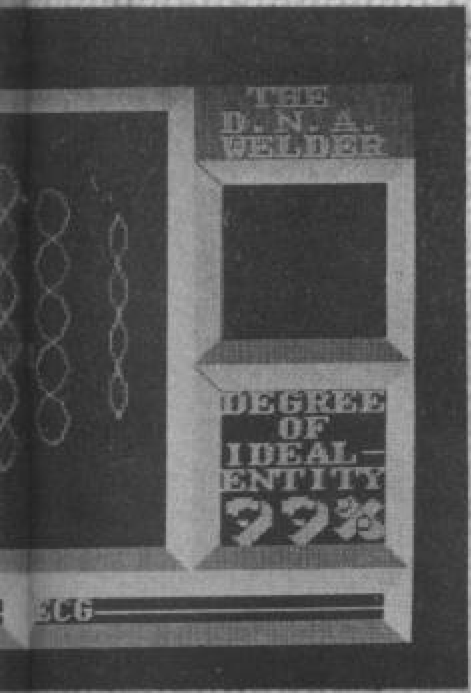
This stage is similar to the last inwhich you must touch the lips with your cursor (!) as they approach your body; later on eyes replace the lips. As a game, this stage is quite easy and it is the last program on side one. The graphics are intriguing, with the sensuous movements of the lips and the hypnotic track by Donna Bailey as The Machine. At this stage, you turn over both tapes, reload and re-synchronise side 2.

Then a Soldier, full of strange oaths. Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel, seeking hi-score, even in the laser's mouth . . .

Now you are grown and as Frankie Howerd intones the chant, 'War crimes are easy', the ground moves under your feet and pitfalls appear over which you must jump. After a while the action changes and mental tortures sear down on



There are few things in life that can be called Global Certainties – this is one of them – that eventually an Automata game on the A side should meet an Automata hit single on the B side, fall in love and mate. This is the result . . .



you. You must protect yourself by raising the telepathic shields and reflecting the blasts. At the last the Fertiliser (Ian Dury) says, 'Killing is wrong, even pretend killing onlittle screens. And people that sell violent games to children should be put away somewhere safe, 'til they get well again.' At which point the machine rebels against the Defect Police.

And the Justice, in fair round belly, with eyes severe and clothes of formal cut. Fullof wise words and machine code . . .

Here you are shown, fat and slow, your empire behind you. Words appear on the ground coming towards you. The words are mixed up, some good and some evil and some conected with evil. You must jump over the good and stamp on the evil.

The Sixth Age shifts into the lean and slipped pantaloon. With spectacles on nose. Their youthful clothes well saved, a world too wide for their shrunken shank. And their adult speech synthesiser turning again towards a childish trebble, piping and whistling in its sound . . .

You see your character old and broken. You must trace his heartbeat.

Your life is expressed as a percentage score. The screen switches and you must split up the blood cells so that they do not clot.

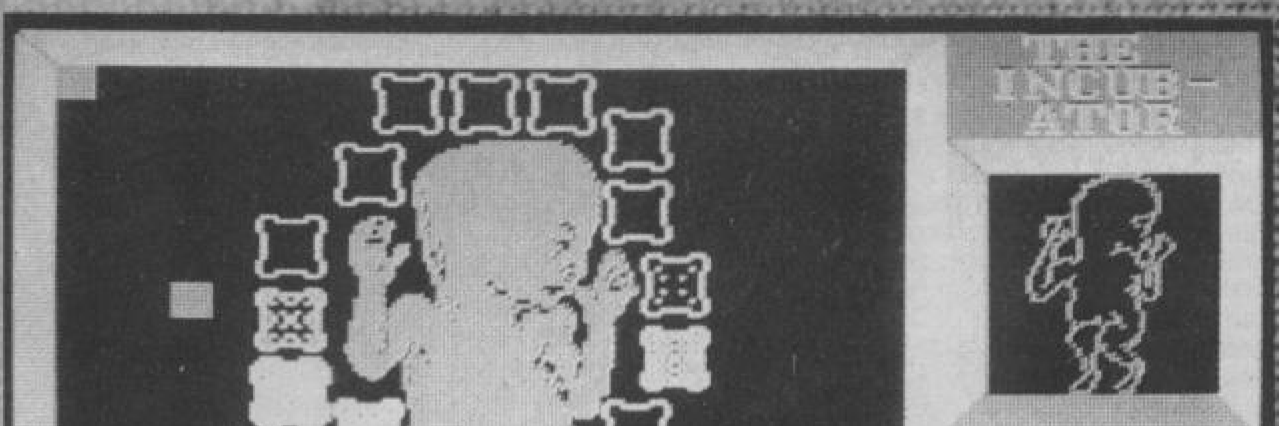
Observe the percentage.

Again the screen changes and again you must trace the heartbeat. So it goes on until death and the end – or the beginning . . .

Last scene of all, that ends this strange, eventuful history, is Second Childishness, and mere oblivion. Without keyboard, without monitor, without power supply . . . *Deus Ex Machina* is not for people who want a straightforward shoot em up because it simply isn't that sort of game. In many senses, it isn't a game at all, although there are humerous little games within its scope. It becomes an experience, aided by the hypnotic sound track and the emotive words. In fact it's hard to decide whether this is an extension of the computer video game by music, or an extension of the 'concept album' by the addition of games playing. In the end, it doesn't really matter – *Deus Ex Machina* is a noble development idea, which points towards a new understanding of what can be done with computer games. It isn't perfect but it is a lot more fun than the idea might sound at first; the graphics throughout are always interesting and sometimes absolutely excellent. The sound track is produced to a high level of quality – we have dotted extracts throughout the review – and in all it's to be hoped that buyers will think £15 is worth it.

We don't inherit the Earth from our ancestors,
We borrow it from our children.

Imagine if we could begin our little life all over again.
Imagine if it was all nothing more than some Electronic game.
Imagine if I knew then what I know now.
What did you learn?
I can't quite remember, but I'll try and be better, next time . . .



Review compiled by Robin Candy & Roger Kean.

ENDURO

Producer: **Activision**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£7.90**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Larry Miller**



The endless road of ENDURO.

Enduro is another Activision translation from a dedicated games cartridge to the Spectrum, the adaption here being done by James Software. Once more you are down on the grid, ready to race through all sorts of conditions against 200 other vehicles. The race starts in broad daylight, takes you through snow and ice, fog and rain towards the sunset, dusk and finally night.

Your car is red, the others are all black. At night time all you can see of them is their headlights until night really settles in, when only their red tail lights glimmer dimly and the road, too, is foreshortened. The overall perspective used is a rather high one, although the road does reach the vanishing point properly. The screen display is mostly green (road and landscape) with the road edges indicated by thin persective lines. A blue sky is separated by hill details which do move about realistically. Sunset is well shown with the sky beginning to turn red. Ice and snow conditions are represented by the predominant green turning white and the car controls in a somewhat sluggish manner to simulate driving conditions.

Below the playing area is a panel containing the day number, number of cars still to overtake and a timer. Running along the edge of the road will slow you down, although this is one of the few road racer games where your vehicle cannot actually run off the road. Also, rather like *Full Throttle*, hitting other vehicles doesnt result in an explosion, but just slows you down.

There is only the one, seemingly endless track to play on, but there is an increase in difficulty as you go from day to day, with the cars bunching more together as you go along.

CRITICISM

● '3D car racing games seem to have a been a bit of a flop on the Spectrum, with not many people attempting to produce a good version. Activision, one of the big names in cartridge software for games-only machines, have realistically reproduced onr of their better games; it cannot be said that this is the best 3D racing game on the market however. *Enduro* features a good representation of a day, sunset and night, with other road conditions such as snow and fog, both of which affect the performance of your car in different ways. Colour has been used well with only minor attribute problems. The road moves in a realistic 3D manner, as do the cars whizzing past you into the distance. The sound would be great if only it was more available. If you want a good, competetive racing car game and are willing to pay almost £8, then this is money well spent.'

● *'Activision's* Enduro *on the Spectrum is not too bad. It still contains features such as night and poor visibility driving. The game is fast, the graphics being okay not over detailed. I found it playable but not that addictive.'*

● 'First impressions of this are those of being ripped – paying eight quid for a game which is little better than *Speed Duel*, and this feeling stayed with me all the while I was playing *Enduro*. You can say of the graphics that they serve their purpose but with no nice extras. The sound is quite good when the car accelerates. This isn't a bad game and it does get quite exciting at times, but I feel at £7.95 it's a bit of a rip off and isn't a patch on *Full Throttle* which is cheaper. All in all, not a bad game but a bit pricey for what it is.'

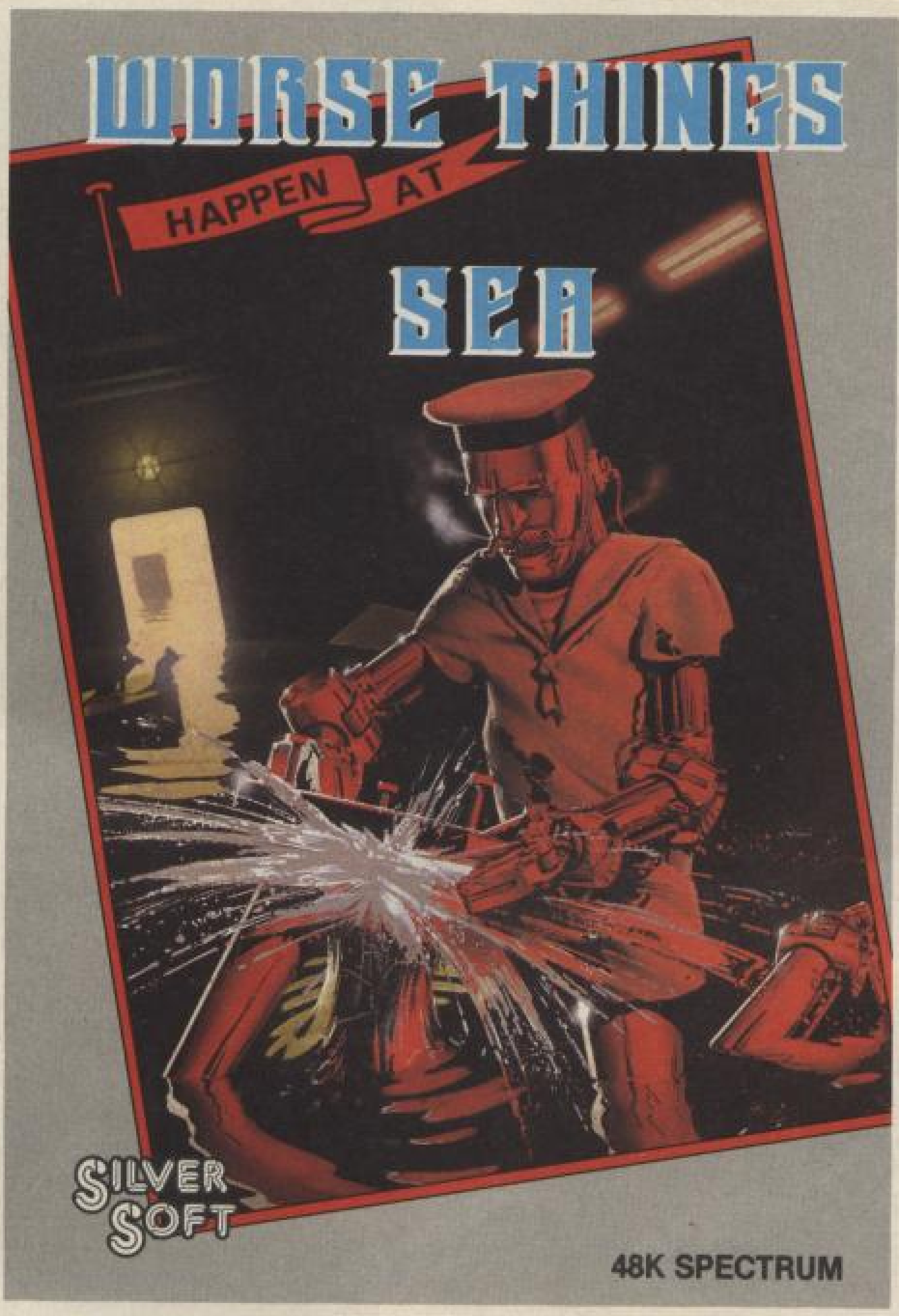
COMMENTS

Control keys: 2/W accelerate/brake, O/P right
Joystick: Sinclair, Kempston, Protek, AGF (accelerate is fire button)
Keyboard play: very responsive, good positions
Use of colour: good
Graphics: not over detailed but fast and smooth with better than average 3D effect
Sound: good
Skill levels: 1 with progressive difficulty
Lives: 1
General rating: above average to good as a game and would be good value overall if the price was lower.

Use of computer	73%
Graphics	67%
Playability	69%
Getting started	69%
Addictive qualities	70%
Value for money	54%
Overall	**67%**

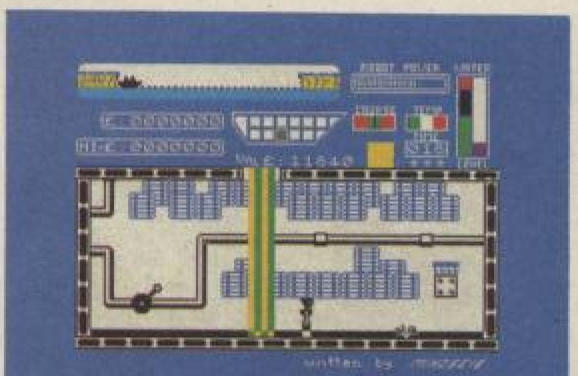
When night falls, all you see is the whites of their headlamps.





FOR ADDED REALISM PLAY THIS STANDING IN THE BATH

You'll probably stay there till someone pulls the plug!
Controlling this nautical nightmare is stormy stuff, especially with only first officer C-Droid to help you. Is the old sailor worth his salt? Or is he just a Jonah?
Dive down to your dealer now for the answer — but be warned — this game will send you overboard!



SILVER SOFT

Silversoft Ltd., London House, 271/273 King Street, London W6 9LZ 01-748 4125

[redacted]



THE SABRE WULF MAP RESULTS

[redacted]

PHEW! So ends the hardest stint of judging we've ever done! The numbers of entries for the Ultimate Sabre Wulf Map Competition was staggering – so was the weight and size. Almost twice as many as for the earlier Atic Atac Map Competition, they arrived in rolls and parcels, and indeed, the winning entry was also one of the largest. It was also a far harder decision to make since the standard of the entries was very high with imagination running riot. Apart from the world's biggest map, we received the world's smallest too. The latest entry was from Phillip 'Bullshot' (no, that's not a misspelling) Scoular, publisher of Personal Computer Games, who enclosed a copy of their issue in which the map was published to prove the point they had it before we did. Unfortunately he had missed the point as well as the date and his entry was returned!

After a heart breaking hour the winner, runners-up and honourable mentions were finally agreed upon...

The Winner

The winning entry to the Ultimate Sabre Wulf Map Competition was sent in by **Steven Westland**, from West Wickam, Kent, assisted by **Ian Statham** and **David Westland**. Steven (14) did the design and drawing, while Ian (13) did the character blow ups and writing. David (11) did the map design and colouring. This was the biggest entry by far, measuring an amazing 4'2½" by 6'3". A colour detail of the map can be seen on the left facing page.

Steven, Ian and David receive between them the unique trophy provided by Ultimate, the **ACG Amulet of Sabre Wulf**. Congratulations to all three.

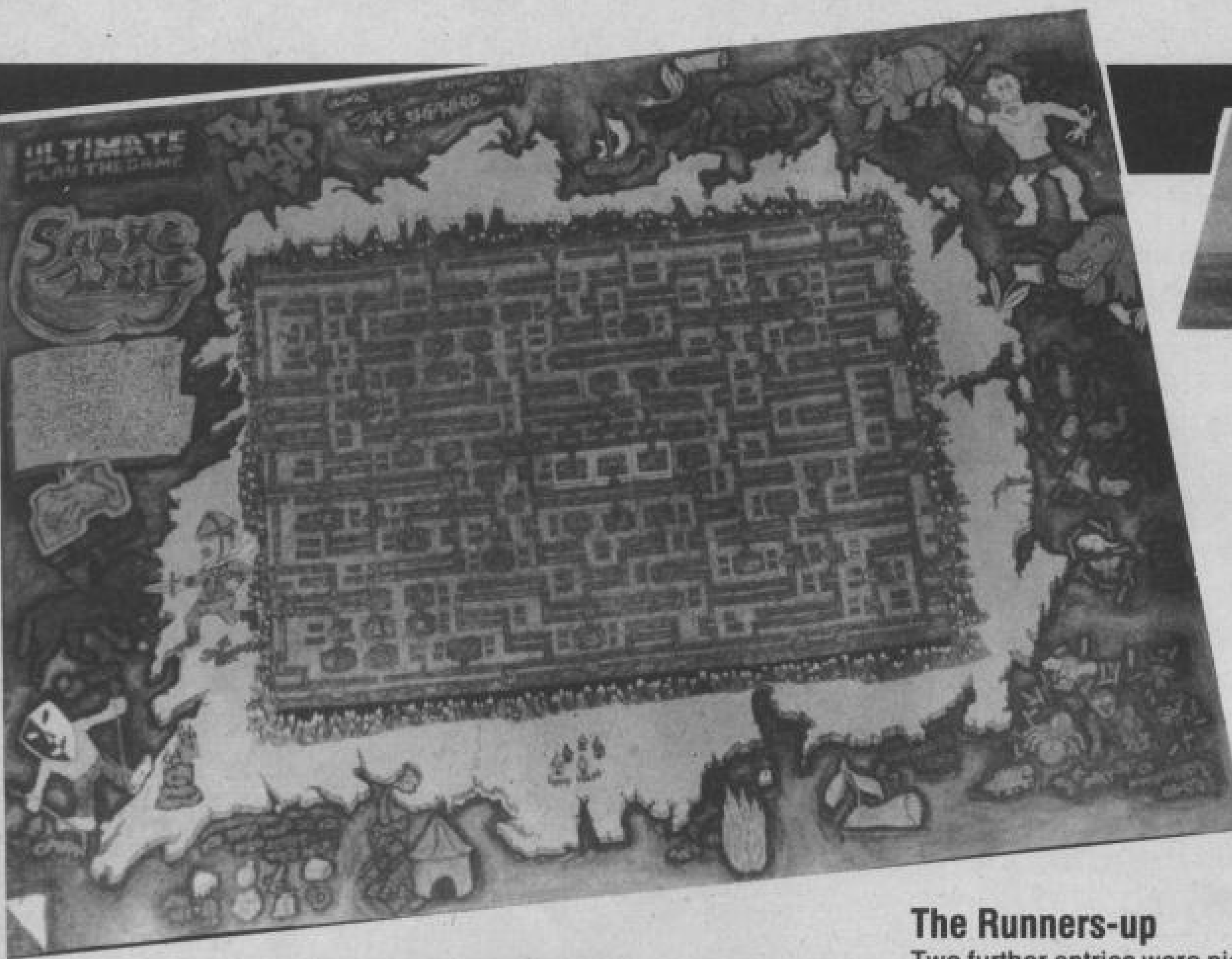


The Sabre Wulf Trophy



The key to the winning map.

The facing page shows a colour detail from the map.





Jake Shepherd brings to life the flora and fauna of the jungle.

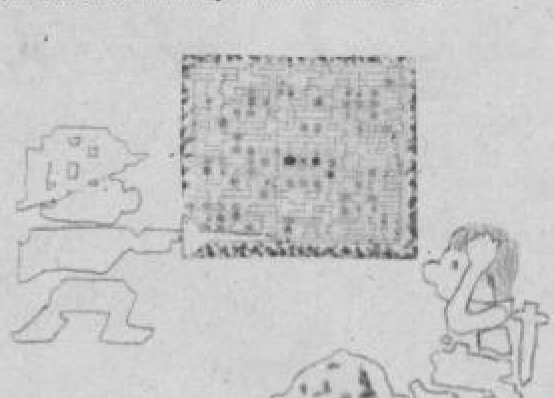
The Runners-up

Two further entries were picked as runners-up and these were from: **Dan Read & Chris Parry** from Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, and **Jake Shepherd** from Fincham, Near King's Lynn, Norfolk.

Dan & Chris presented their map in large format book form with a very nice cover. Jake's was a flat map with a very imaginatively and graphically designed border all around the island where the action takes place. Dan, Chris and Jake will each receive a copy of Ultimate's next game – the amazing **Knight Lore**, as soon as it is available.



The Wurlde's Smallest Sabre Wulf Map – shown the same size!



Dan read & Chris Parry's book version.



The Honourable Mentions

It was hard, very hard, and most of the Honourable Mentions come in not far behind the winner and runners-up. These are in order of picking, not merit! **Charles P. Cohen** of Totteridge, London N20 whose neat, detailed map also included a very wry and amusing account of the entire game in the form of a novel, which we will print in the Christmas Special. **Eammon Kenny** from Harlow, Essex for the splendid and surreal cover picture which enclosed his map. **Damon R. H. Butler** from Shipley, W. Yorkshire for a very colourful map with beautifully drawn devices around it and a marvellous booklet, full of detail (especially Sabreman stuck in quicksand). **Andrew Sandham**, Trophins, Banchory, Kincardineshire whose highly detailed map resembled a Victorian antimacassar(!) and looked very neat. And finally, **Glen McDowall**, from Salibury, Wiltshire, for the 'Wurlde's Smallest Sabre Wulf Map' which was just wunderful!

The Honourable Mentions will each receive a CRASH T-shirt. Unfortunately there isn't room this month to print pictures of all these maps, but we will devote some more space next month. Finally, may we say thank you to the three hundred plus people who have obviously spent hours and hours over this project. Let's hope Ultimate can arrange an exhibition (hint, hint), so many deserve it.
One special honourable mention must go to the mother of James Milner who dashed from his home in Coventry to our offices in Ludlow specially to deliver James' entry at the very last second. James has also produced a massive map on separate boards with lots of detail, but in the opinion of the judges, it didn't quite make it into the Hon mentions – Mrs Milner did, however!







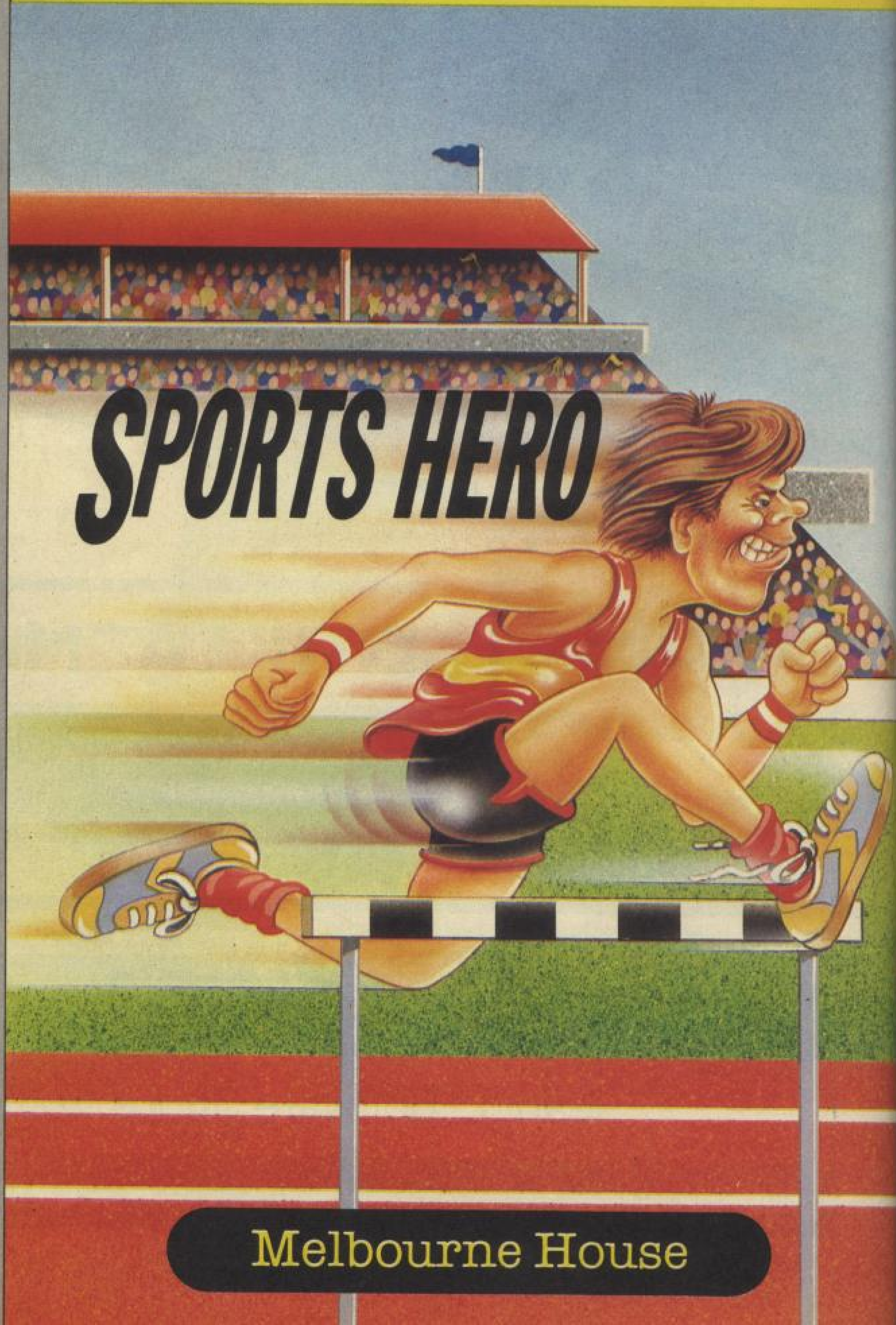
Work your way through the most challenging track and field events. As you gain experience and confidence you begin to excel in the four exciting events: 100 metre sprint, 110 metre hurdles, long jump and pole vault.

Here's your chance to be part of the winning team. Pit yourself against the clock and beat the record.

Sports Hero includes:

- ★ Multi level competition
- ★ Spectacular graphics
- ★ Smooth animation
- ★ Real time action

Can you surpass your personal best!



Orders to:
Melbourne House Publishers
39 Milton Trading Estate
Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4TD

Correspondence to:
Church Yard
Tring
Hertfordshire HP23 5LU

All Melbourne House cassette software is unconditionally guaranteed against malfunction.

Trade enquiries welcome.

☐ Please send me your free catalogue.
Please send me:

SPECTRUM 48K BOOKS & SOFTWARE

SOFTWARE

☐ Spectrum Sports Hero 48K	£6.95
☐ Spectrum Sherlock 48K	£14.95
☐ Spectrum Hampstead 48K	£9.95
☐ Spectrum Mugsy 48K	£6.95
☐ Spectrum Penetrator 48K	£6.95
☐ Spectrum The Hobbit 48K	£14.95
☐ H.U.R.G. 48K	£14.95
☐ Spectrum Classic Adventure 48K	£6.95
☐ Melbourne Draw 48K	£8.95
☐ Abersoft FORTH 48K	£14.95

BOOKS

☐ Complete Spectrum BASIC Course	£9.95
☐ Micronet Book	£6.95
☐ Spectrum Software Projects	£6.95
☐ Over The Spectrum	£4.95
☐ Spectrum Machine Language for the Absolute Beginner	£5.95
☐ Advanced Spectrum Machine Language	£6.95
☐ The Complete Spectrum ROM Disassembly	£9.95
☐ Super Charge Your Spectrum	£5.95
☐ Understanding Your Spectrum	£6.95
☐ Spectrum Microdrive Book	£5.95

£ ....

Please add 80p for post & pack £ .... .80

TOTAL £ ....

I enclose my ☐ cheque
☐ money order for £ ....

Please debit my Access card No ....

....

Expiry Date ....

Signature ....

Name ....

Address ....

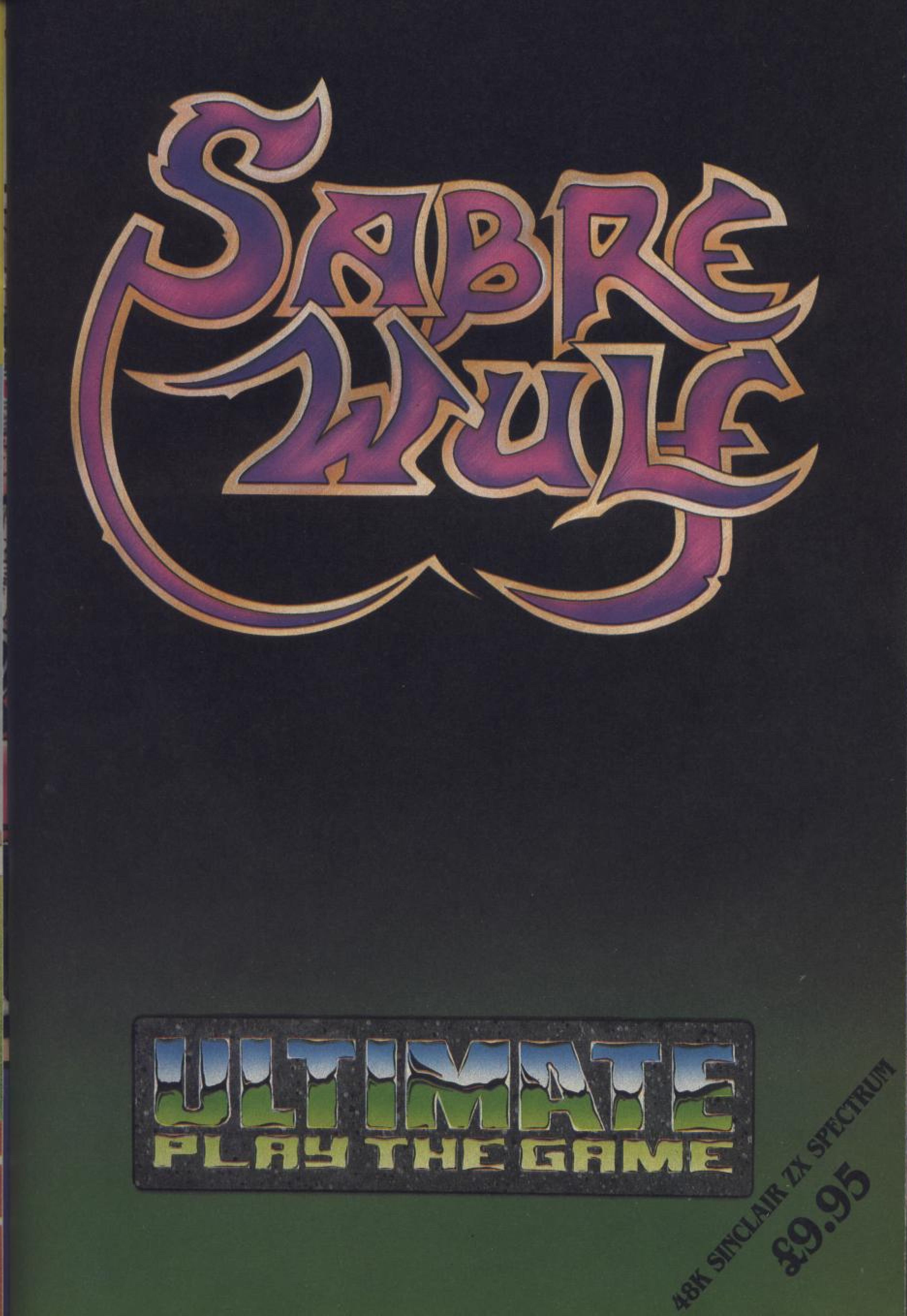
....

....

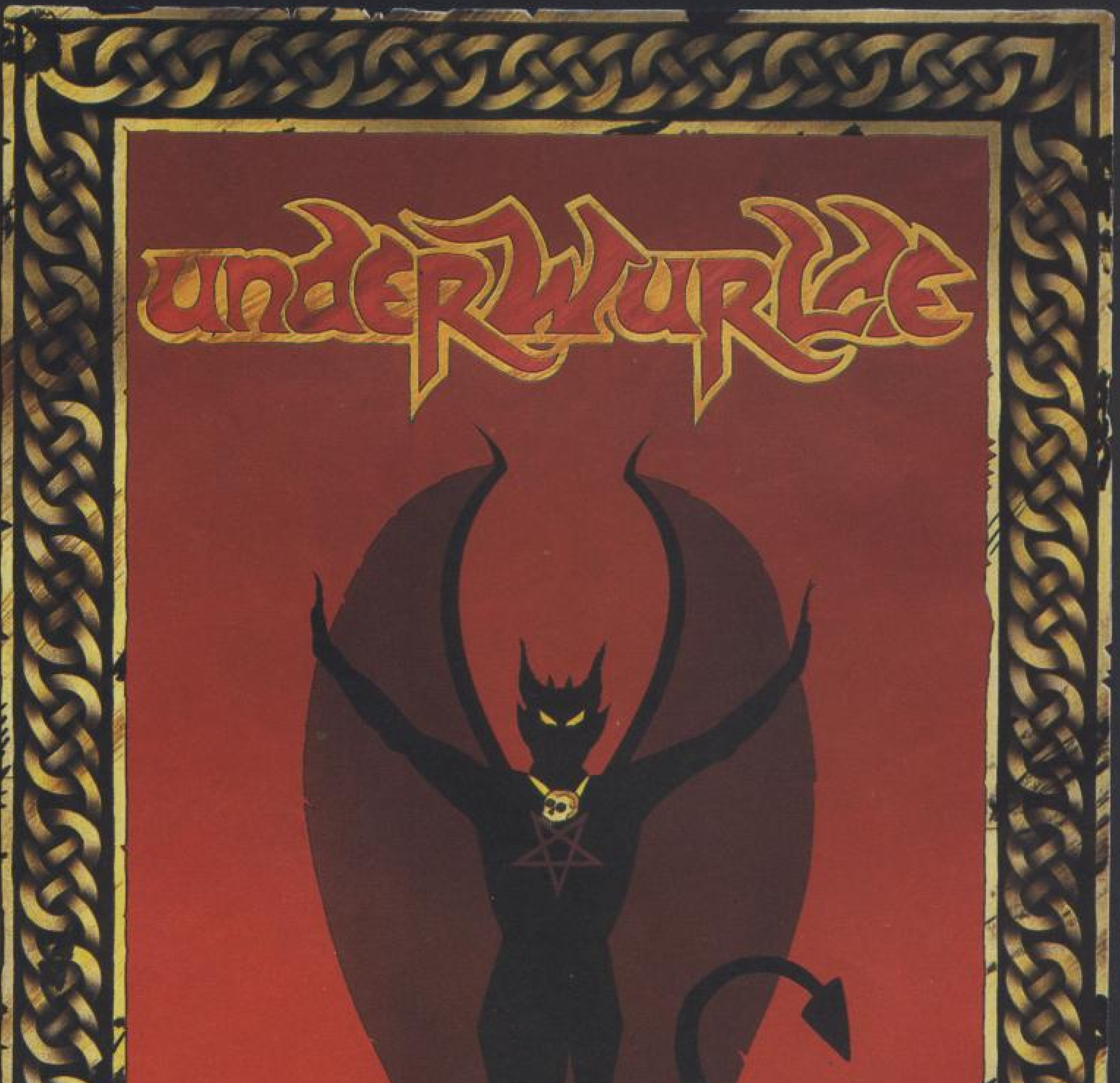
.... Postcode ....

CRASH!!

Access orders can be telephoned through on our 24-hour ansafone (0235) 83 5001.


SABRE WULF
ULTIMATE
PLAY THE GAME
48K SINCLAIR ZX SPECTRUM
£9.95

48K SINCLAIR ZX SPECTRUM



"UNDERWURLDE" recommended retail price £9.95 inc VAT
Available from W.H.SMITHS, BOOTS, J.MENZIES, WOOLWORTHS
and all good software retail outlets. Also available from
ULTIMATE PLAY THE GAME, The Green, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire LE6 5JU
(P&P included) Tel: 0530 411485

The ultimate development from agf



Designed exclusively for the ZX Spectrum, Protocol 4 brings you game control customising in a way that no other interface does. It can accept all commercially standard joysticks, including the Quickshot II with 'rapid fire' or Trackball controllers, and is compatible with ALL Spectrum software. **OPERATES LIKE FIXED OPTION INTERFACES OR CAN BE FULLY HARDWARE PROGRAMMED**

The flexibility of Protocol 4 control is achieved by a specially designed 'CustomCard' system. CustomCards are easily programmed to suit all types of games.

Simply clip in a programmed card for immediate customised control. You can even change or reprogram the cards without affecting the game in the computer so that you can get exactly the responses you want. With the addition of extra cards you can build up a whole library of 'CustomCards' for all your favourite games.

Utilising Hardware Programmed technology you have the benefit of automatic eight direction control, no power-down programming loss, guaranteed conflict-free operation with other peripherals, including microdrives, and no extra software to load or awkward joystick movements and key presses to make each time you load another game. The keyboard remains fully operative at all times.

It is also perfectly possible to connect up to five Protocol 4's on one Spectrum, each programmed separately, for multiple player control — only possible with the hardware programmed design.

Incorporated into the design is a computer Reset button for clearing the computer memory between games without pulling the power plug out.

Fully guaranteed for 18 months, Protocol 4 comes supplied with five CustomCards, ten Quick Reference Programming Cards and complete instructions.



PROGRAMMABLE INTERFACE

As the first fully hardware programmed joystick interface, this product has become well established over the past year and will accept ALL standard joysticks or trackballs, including Quickshot II with 'rapid fire', for use with ALL Spectrum or ZX81 software — not just those with a joystick option.

* No Software programming required.
* Programming is *not* lost when power is disconnected between games.
* Eight way movement — with or without the fire button pressed — only requires setting of the four normal directions.
* Compatibility is guaranteed with ALL key reading techniques — machine code or BASIC.
* Several interfaces can be separately programmed and fitted to one computer for multiple player games.

Keyboard operation is totally unaffected by this interface, as with all AGF add-ons, and will never conflict with *any* other device fitted at the same time.

Twelve months guarantee, key programming information and a pack of Quick Reference Cards, to speed up setting of the clips, are supplied with full instructions.

INTERFACE II

The AGF Interface II represents the best low cost introduction to joystick control.

The 'AGF' control standard is now offered by over 100 games or utility programs for use with any joystick or trackball.

Any game which is controlled by the cursor movement keys (5,6,7,8) or has a Protek option is also compatible with Interface II.

A rear connector allows other peripherals to be connected at the same time.

This product is available for either the Spectrum or ZX81, is supplied with full instructions, a 12 month guarantee, and a 12½% discount voucher against further AGF mail-order purchases.

ROMSLOT

The new AGF RomSlot is designed for anyone who already owns a programmable joystick interface, or prefers to use the keyboard to control games, and would like to add the facility of ROM cartridge software to their system.

RomSlot will accept the Sinclair range of instant loading games and will also be compatible with the new releases from Parker Software — exciting new games only to be available in ROM format.

This system allows instant play. Your computer memory size is not important and you will be able to play games that could ordinarily require more RAM.

RomSlot incorporates an extra feature called 'Restart'. This allows you to instantly *restart* the ROM game.

RomSlot is guaranteed for 12 months and has a full width expansion connector to accept joystick interfaces, speed units and printers etc.

QUICKSHOT

The Quickshot joystick is an excellent value game controller incorporating suction cups for sure-footed precision with a comfortably contoured handle offering a convenient top firing button as well as one on the base.

QUICKSHOT II

Quickshot II has improved styling with a trigger type firing button as well as the top firing action, with a broader base for greater suction stability.

It also has a unique 'Auto-Fire' facility which at the flick of a switch provides a constant rapid firing action simulating a fast trigger finger.

	PRICE	TICK BOX OPPOSITE REQUIRED ITEM
AGF Protocol 4	£29.95 + £1.00 p&p	☐
AGF Programmable Interface	£24.95 + £1.00 p&p	☐
AGF RomSlot	£ 9.95 + £0.50 p&p	☐
AGF Interface II	£ 9.95 + £0.50 p&p	☐
Quickshot II Joystick	£10.50 + £0.50 p&p	☐
Quickshot Joystick	£ 7.95 + £0.50 p&p	☐
Extra 'CustomCards' (5 per pack)	£ 3.95 inc. p&p	☐
Extra Quick Reference Programming Cards (10 per pack)	£ 0.65 inc. p&p	☐

SPECIFY COMPUTER

I enclose cheque for ....
(total for items required)

My Name ....

Address ....

....

Send to: AGF Hardware, 26 Van Gogh Place, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO22 9BY.
(0243) 823337

There's nowhere else to go agf

SUB HUNTER is a brand new release from the only software house writing Spectrum games in Worcestershire. Based in Kidderminster (a mere missile lob away from the Ludlow offices of CRASH), **Micromart Software** has just released a batch of new games. Apart from *Sub Hunter*, these include *Strike Attack 2* (both games priced at £6.95), the budget priced adventure *Golden Hawk* and family game *The Gambler* as well as two educational programs — *World flags* and *Junior Maths Pack*, all priced at £1.99 Micromart are also planning a release soon for their utility program called *CHR$ Graphics Editor*.

Sub Hunter is a simulation in which you must hunt down, track and destroy enemy submarines. This is the task of Long Range Maritime Patrol (LRMP) aircraft such as a Nimrod MkII of the Royal Air Force. You will be flying at 5,000 feet doing 300 knots and at your disposal you have active and passive sonar buoys, a Magnetic Anomaly Detector Bomb and variable setting depth charges.

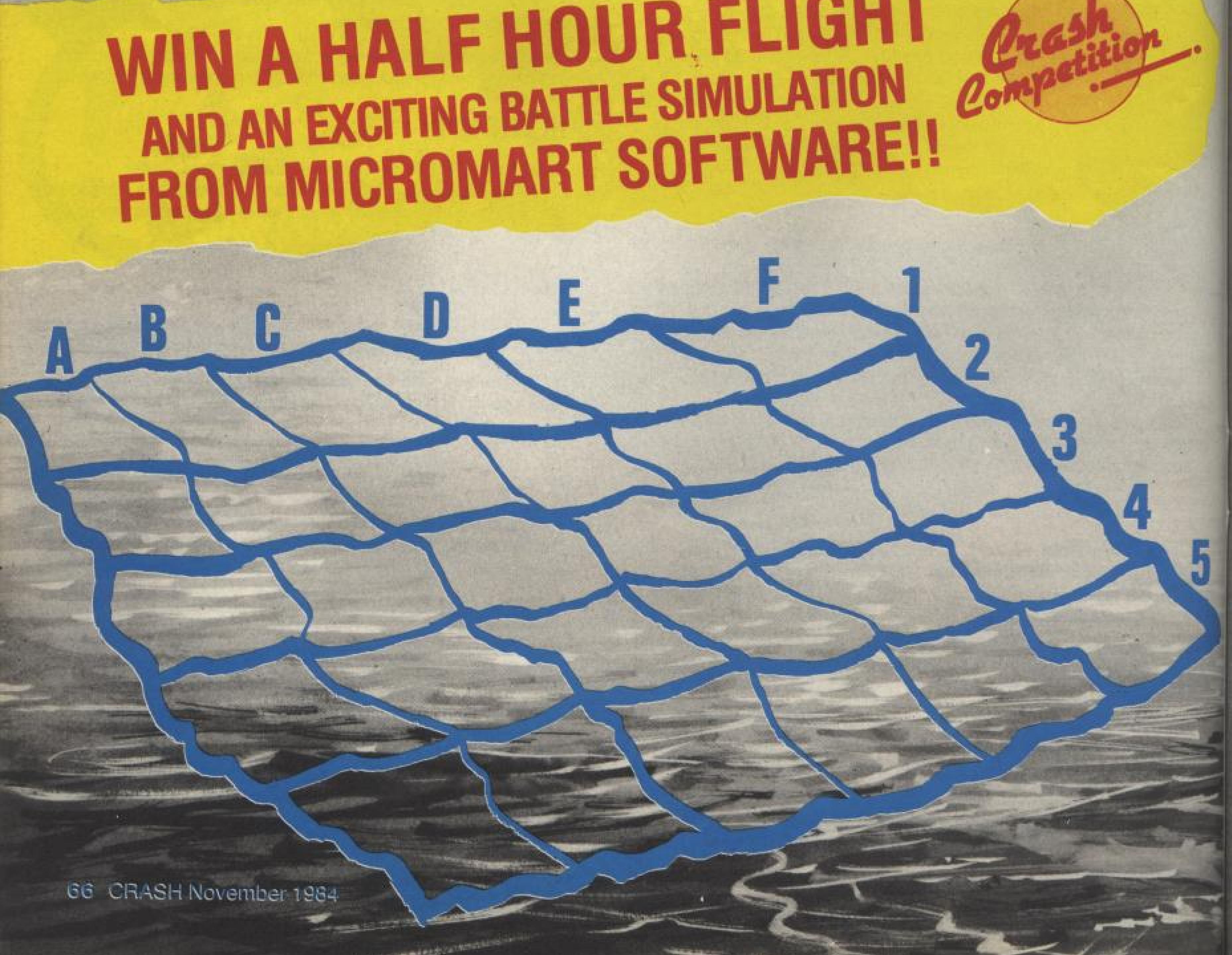
Errol Dyer is the boss at Micromart, but in the air it is his brother **Flight Lieutenant Joe Dyer** who takes the controls. By day Joe navigates Phantom jets off a top RAF strike base and by night he designs simulation games for the Spectrum based on his knowledge and experience. The two often come together in his job at RAF Wattisham, where he trains young fliers through simulated life-and-death emergencies they could face in action. Joe is no stranger to such action either, having flown against Argentine fighters in the Falklands. Joe Dyer's first Micromart game, *Strike Attack*, has been considerably updated, and is now re-released as *Strike Attack 2*, a simulated attack profile in a high speed jet fighter where you must fly by your instruments. *Sub Hunter* is his second program.

Micromart Software are offering CRASH readers the chance for fifty people to win a copy of *Sub Hunter*. But in addition, the first person drawn will also win a half hour flight in a private light aircraft from Elstree airport near London.

Take a good look at the illustration on these pages which shows your Nimrod aircraft flying over the sea. Somewhere under the waves are two enemy subs. They can be found underneath the superimposed grid. Your job is to decide accurately which grid reference to attack to hit them. You are allowed five hits to find the two subs. Write down the grid references on a postcard, or the outside of a sealed envelope, and send it in to **SUB HUNTER COMPETITION, CRASH MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB** to arrive no later than first post **November 22.** The 50 most accurate answers will win. In the event of there being more than one entry with two direct hits, these will be put into the voluminous CRASH BAG and drawn for first place, to find the lucky winner of the flight.

WIN A HALF HOUR FLIGHT
AND AN EXCITING BATTLE SIMULATION FROM MICROMART SOFTWARE!!

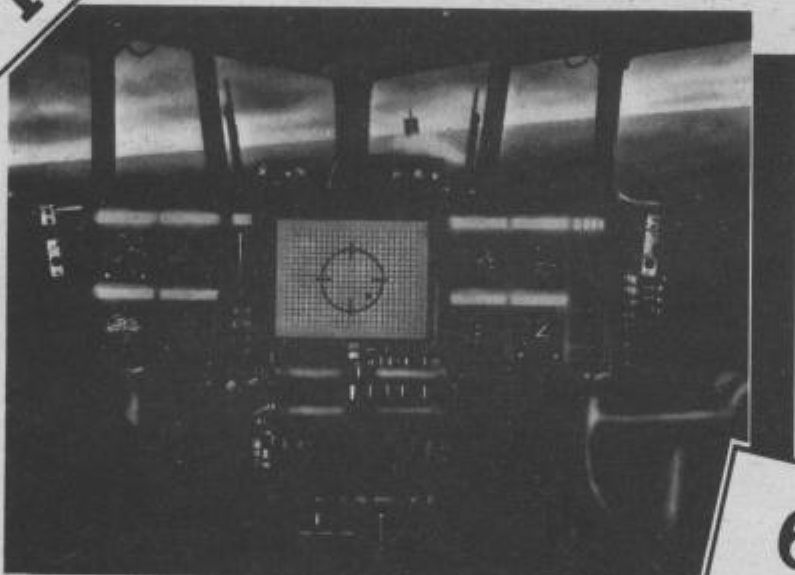
Crash Competition





NEW RELEASES

SUB HUNTER



THE 1ST SIMULATION OF ITS KIND

You are The Tactical Co-ordinator of a LONG RANGE MARITIME PATROL (LRMP) aircraft such as a NIMROD Mk II of the RAF whose primary task is to hunt down, track and destroy enemy submarines. Flying at 5000ft, doing 300 knots, at the edge of a 24 n. Mile sq. area, in which there is known to be an enemy submarine, whose Commander will take all forms of evasion action to defeat your attack.

● Includes Manual

6.95 EACH (+ P. P.)



Strike Attack A VERY ORIGINAL SIMULATION!

This is a SIMULATED ATTACK PROFILE (SAP) of a Strike Attack aircraft en route to its target. You are the "Navigator/Weapons Systems Operator" (WSO pronounced Wizzo) of the aircraft.

Includes
- Manual
- Keyboard overlay



One of the very best graphic utility ever written. Extremely user friendly, with joystick control and includes, LINE, CURSOR Drawing, CIRCLES, COLOUR change, MOVE YOUR FIGURE and lots more. Full M/C utility at an absolute bargain price.

4.95 (+ P. P.)



MATHS PACK (age 5-11 years). Addition/Subtraction. Large numbers, user friendly, levels. A-Z, colour and sound.
WORLD FLAGS (ages 5-11 years). A gazzetteer/gazzette in which you have to name the flag, and Capital City, get it correct and a wealth of further information will be given.
THE GAMBLER (aged 9 and over). 3 family games, Pool, Pontoon and Hi-Lo, Hi-Res M/C action, fun for all the family.
GOLDEN HAWK (age 9 and over) A fantastic M/C graphic adventure which will entertain, baffle and give you hours of entertainment.

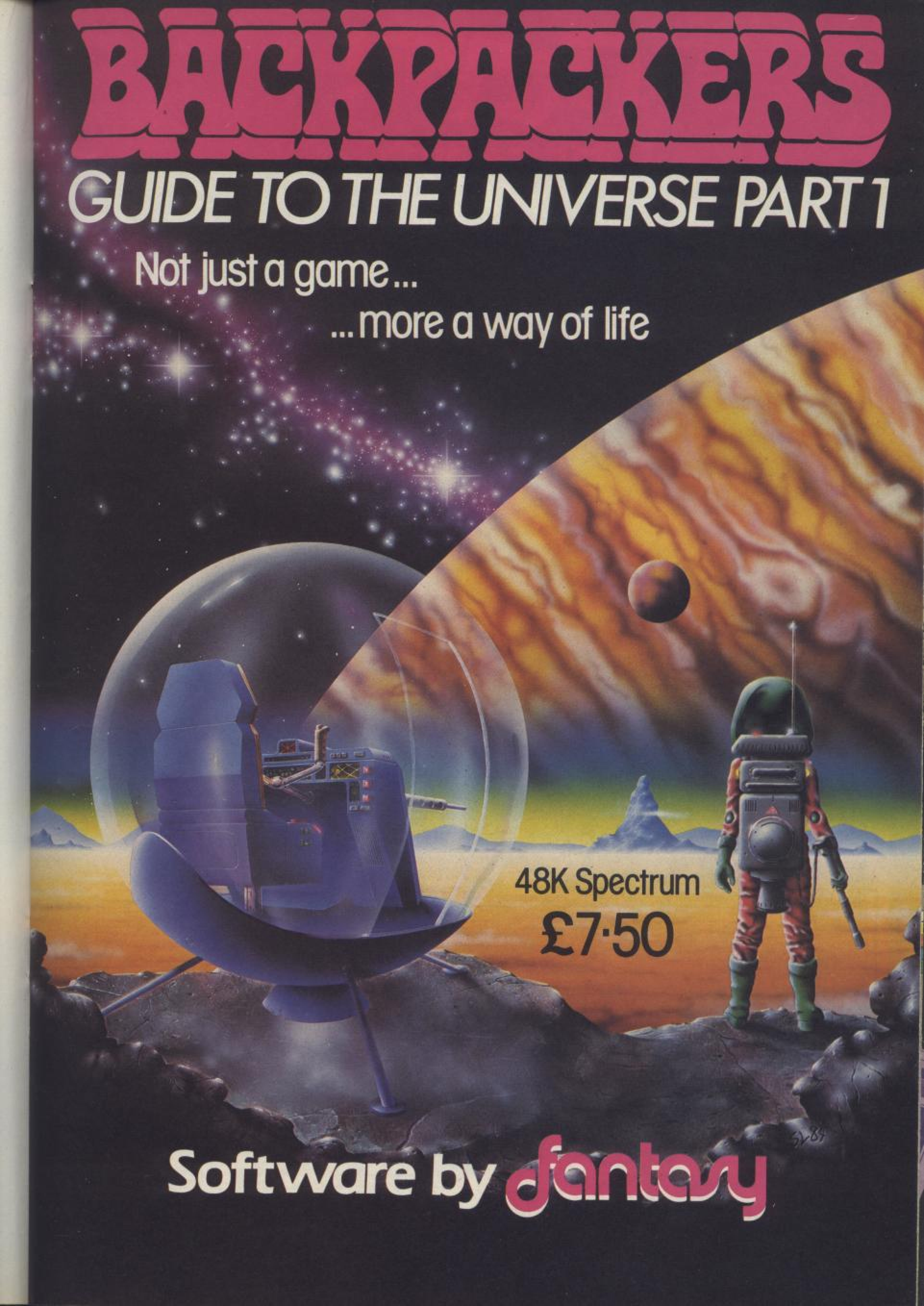
1.99 EACH (+ P. P.)

DEALERS WELCOME

MICROMART SOFTWARE
(0562) 742142

We reach parts of the brain, others still can't find . . .

Available from all good stockists and from CENTRE SOFT or MICRODEALER or direct from us — 84 NEW ROAD, KIDDERMINSTER, WORCESTERSHIRE
P & P Extra 40p. U.K. only ☐ Sub Hunter ☐ Strike Attack ☐ MICRO DRAW
☐ Maths Pack ☐ World Flags ☐ The Gambler ☐ Golden Hawk
I Enclose Cheque for £ .... or Debit my credit card
Access ☐
B/Card ☐
Name/Address ....


BACKPACKERS
GUIDE TO THE UNIVERSE PART 1
Not just a game...
...more a way of life
48K Spectrum
£7·50
Software by fantasy

CRASH

THE EASIEST WAY OF BUYING SPECTRUM SOFTWARE YOU WILL FIND!

All you have to do is fill in the form below and send it off. We still offer a *FREEPOST* ordering service, but please remember that it can take three to four times longer to reach us than ordinary First Class post. If you would prefer a speedier delivery then we recommend you use a stamp. Orders received with a first class stamp will be despatched within 24 hours by first class post.

ANY OF THE SOFTWARE REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE* OF CRASH MAGAZINE MAY BE ORDERED BY MAIL USING THE FORM BELOW.

*In the case of very new programmes which may not be available from the software producer yet, it is advisable to ring first and check on availability.

CRASH MICRO GAMES ACTION ORDER FORM

Telephone Ludlow (0584) 5620.

Please send me the following titles: Block capitals please!

Title	Producer	Amount

Name. . . . .

Subscriber No. if applicable

Address. . . . .

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

Postcode . . . .

All prices are as quoted under review headings and include VAT. Crash Micro Games Action make no charge for postage and packaging. Customers in Europe should add 50p per item for post and packing. Outside Europe, please write first so that we may advice on postage rates.

Please make cheques or postal orders payable to 'CRASH MICRO'. From Europe we can accept Sterling cheques or Girocheques.

Sub Total: £

Less Discount £

Total Enclosed £

SPECIAL DISCOUNTS

£1 OFF ANY ORDER WORTH MORE THAN £20

50p OFF ANY ORDER WORTH MORE THAN £10

Sorry – only ONE voucher per order!

CRASH MICRO, FREEPOST *(no stamp required)*, **LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 IBR**

ADVERTISEMENT


ULTIMATE
PLAY THE GAME
PRESENTS
JETMAN
... THE CONTINUED SAGA OF A LOONY...
OKAY! LETH GET THITH DUEL ON THE ROAD! THE THCORE THO FAR ITH, OUR HERO... 100, ON ACCOUNT OF THE LOONY THWORE, AND THWEARING IN FRONT OF A LADY ITH A 'NO-NO'!
SCORES
RASP!
GIRLTH BLOUTHE!
HERE ITH THE FIRTHT TETHT! FIRTHT ONE THROUGH THE MATHE GETH ONE THOUTHAND POINTH!
LOOK OUT FOR THE THARP BITTH!
HAH! I WILL SHOW THIS LI'L GREEN BIMBO HOW FAST AN' FEARLESS US EARTHMEN ARE!
RIP
SCRATCH
AND SO... WITH THE FEROCITY OF A BUDGIE AND THE STRENGTH OF TWO BROWNIES, JETMAN STRUGGLES ONWARD AND UPWARDS...
ACK!
PANT!
BLEAT!
OUR HERO ITH FIRTHT THROUGH, THO WE WIN ONTHE AGAIN!
HUP!
THE THCORE NOW THTANDTH AT... OUR HERO-1100, THE LOONY-ZILCH!
THE NEXTH'T TETHT WILL BE TO THEE HOW HIGH THE CONTETHTANTH...
SCORES
RAAAY
YAAY
RAAAH
... CAN JUMP...
HAHAH! A JUMPIN' CONTEST!
WITH MY LONGER LEGS AN' SUPER SHOCK ABSORBING BOOTS, I CAN'T LOSE!
... INTHIDE THE THPETHIAL JUMP MEATHURING DEVITHE!
GO, BABY!
YEAH
GO!
?
PLAP
HUP!
GASP!
RAAAY
OUR HERO ITH THE WINNER WITH A NEATO JUMP OF FOUR FEET! THAT MAKETH THE THCORE... OUR HERO-2100, THE LOONY-NAFF ALL!
AND NOW, YOU WILL BOTH FIGHT THE WAR-ROBOT...
...ARMED ONLY WITH A POINTY TNTICK!
SWITH
CHUP-CHIP-
CHOP
WHIRR
CLANK
...THE LOONY CHICKENTH OUT! NOW ITH OUR HERO'TH TURN!
SCORES
WHIRR
SWISH
AND OUR HERO HIT'TH THE 'OFF' THWITCH FIRTHT TIME!
HOW!
CLICK
THO, OUR HERO WINTH AN ITHE-CREAM, AND THE THILLY LOONY GET'TH THNUFFED!
SCORES
GOSH! WILL THEY DARE TO THNUFF OUR HERO? THEE NEX' MUNTH!

YOUR PLANET NEEDS YOU!

Train to save Civilisation by

Subscribing to

CRASH

MICRO GAMES ACTION

Subscribers' Discount ~ 50p off each Crash Micro Mail Order item!



- Get your copy ahead of the crowd
- UK: 6 issues £5·00 (post free) 12 issues £10·00 (post free)
- Europe £17 (12 issues post incl.)

I would like to subscribe to CRASH for **6/12** issues

Starting with issue ________

Name...

Address...

....

Postcode.................. I enclose £ ________

CRASH (Subs), PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB

adventure for commodore 64 and spectrum 48k

NEW RELEASE AVAILABLE 20th OCT

NO.1 SWORDS & SORCERY





WIZARDS *power level 1 — 10*



DRAGON *power level 7 — 9*



LYTCH *power level 6 — 10*



WEREWOLF *power level 4*

a selection of your opponents

the MIDAS adventure concept

PSS

SWORDS & SORCERY

Swords and Sorcery represents the first example of the ultimate in graphic adventures using the unique MIDAS system.

Swords and Sorcery differs from other adventures in that you guide your character through the unending corridors of the underworld on a quest for material, physical and/or spiritual power. The choice is yours.

You begin as a novice with limited abilities in the use of magic, sword play and stealth (lock picking, thieving etc).

As you wander the corridors, you will encounter beings meek and mighty, discover untold wealth and worthless trash. Some objects will increase your powers, whilst some will be dangerous and still others will be protected from pilferers (you!) by friendishly ingenious traps, all designed to help or hinder you on your pilgrimage to power and glory.

There are quests within quests within Swords and Sorcery, for those who want to follow them. Some are given others must be found, and some are lost causes. There are many ways of opening the gate between the levels of the dungeons. Some are obscure and easy, others obvious and dangerous. The most profitable paths are both. The Ultimate goal of many will be to find the lost armour of Zob, which was un-made by its maker, and its parts scattered across the levels. What, where, how, who and why are answers to be found. All that is known is the prayer of the seekers:

WHEN DARK CABALLUS HIS COUNCILS LEND US
LET NOT THE RED CLUPEA HARANGUE US
TURN US FROM WHAT SEEMS TREMENDOUS AND
THUS TO ZOBS GREAT TREASURE SEND US.

You need never tire of Swords and Sorcery — when this dungeon can no longer hold you, the next awaits. . . there are a series of expansion modules planned to extend your enjoyment indefinitely.

Available on Cassette £9·95

SPECTRUM 48K OR COMMODORE 64

(Multi Dimensional Animation System)

MIDAS ADVENTURE CONCEPT

Stunning 3D graphic animation simulating video disk games.

A unique fully interactive adventure language using the latest ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE techniques.

State of the art data compression techniques enabling enormous scenarious and vocabularies to be incorporated.

Real time Interactive Conflict Sequences.Talk to your opponent, attack them, flee them and even confuse them.

Joystick capability for movement, combat and actions through unique menu feature. Keyboard operation for more complex interaction with the adventure when time permits.

Develop your own unique player characters. For example — specialize in magic, swordplay etc.

Total expandability — your own characters can be transferred to future adventures and new opponents, scenarious and objects can be added to all the games. A series of expansion modules to increase indefinitely the playing life of each game written with MIDAS.

P.S.S. 452 STONEY STANTON RD. COVENTRY CV6 5DG. TEL: COVENTRY (0203) 667556

Crash Competition

Guess who's coming to dinner...



It was a cosy mittel-European night as the eery wind howled outside the draped windows blowing age-old soot down the cavernous chimneys. Chez Castle Frank N. Stein the Prof and his monstrous guest were just sitting down to dinner, a double helping of dragon's eggs in aspic, when a tremor shook the table. At first Frank N. Stein thought it might be one of the monster's capacitors overheating again, but when the tremble renewed itself and turned into a distinct shudder, they both locked glances in alarm.

A second later and one of the unoccupied chairs wobbled and lifted up, floating crazily around their heads. It was followed in quick succession by a glass and some of the cutlery that Frank always had laid out in case unexpected, unsuspecting guests arrived at the last moment. In moments the room was a whirling dervish of knives, forks, spoons, glasses, salt cellars and eggshells.

Emerging from the centre of the maelstrom they saw a deathly pale figure with staring blue eyes. Frank N. Stein wracked his brain and a memory nudged him. Of course, it was All Hallows Eve – *Halloween!* He had forgotten his second guest – the Poltergeist had come to dinner and left him with egg on his face.

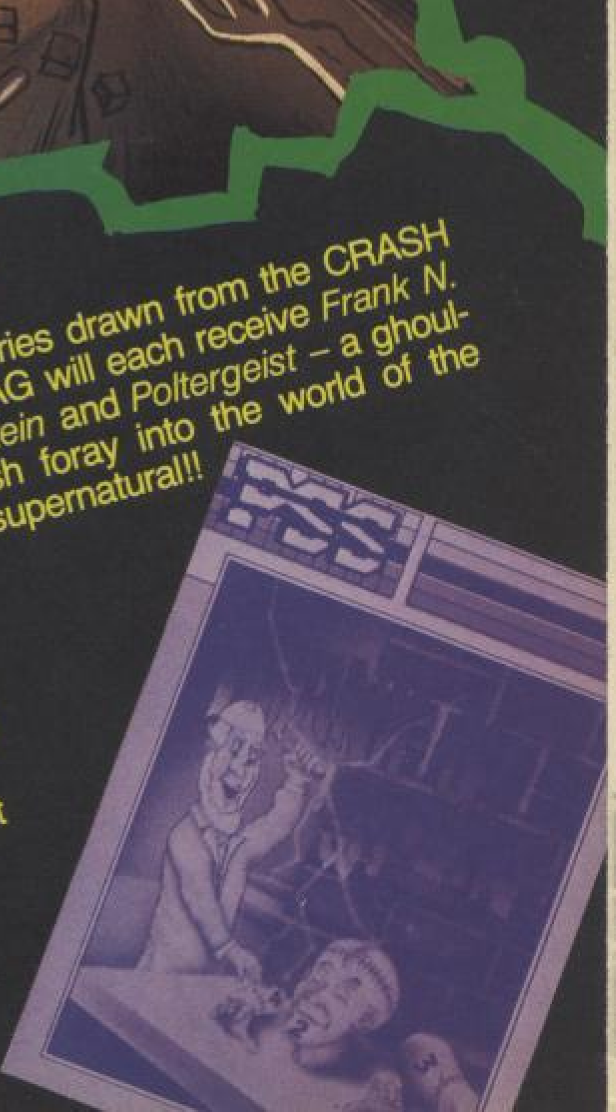




200 eery games of arcade horror from P.S.S. are yours if you dare risk the challenge – 100 people can win a copy of *Frank N. Stein* and a copy of *Poltergeist*, the latest program of foetid imagination from beyond the grave, conjured up by P.S.S.

All you have to do to have a chance of winning these two super action games is to count up all the forks that are visible in the picture and write the answer on a postcard. Send it in to **P.S.S. CRASH COMPETITION, MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB** to arrive no later than first post **November 22.**

The first hundred correct entries drawn from the CRASH BAG will each receive *Frank N. Stein* and *Poltergeist* – a ghoulish foray into the world of the supernatural!!





Lloyd Mangram's HALL of SLIME

Psst 81,080
Lunar Jetman 151,400 on L10
Pool (CDS) 1,360 on F4
Ant Attack 45,826, 10 rescued
Thrusta 21,130 on L22
Deathchase 207,224 on L32
Chequered Flag (Cambridge Ring) 1.04.46
Exterminator 204,224 on phase 27
Pinball Wizard 22,100
Snowman 47,720
Wild West Hero 91,025 on wave 20
Defenda 55,700 on wave 5
Android 2 9,200 (Flatlands)
Blade Alley 68,820 on L16, Admiral
Pogo 78,975 on L12
Pheenix 56,565
Fred 36,300 on L5
Matrix 67,408 on zone 10
Sabre Wulf 165,640 at 88%
TLL 8,956 on M4
Moon Alert 21,380 letter Q
Ad Astra 31,170 (16:52)
Antics 49,040 and rescued Boris
G. Chidwick, Grimsby, S. Humberside

Full Throttle Donnington 1st by 13.27
Moon Alert 34,780
Antics 37,320
Exterminator 205,646
Psytron – level 4
C. Young, Central Region, Scotland

Lords of Midnight 403 days of battle and completed 4th August (just before Dynasty)!
David Harrison (16), Burgess Hill, W. Sussex

Ad Astra 101,120 in 48 minutes 37 seconds
Lords of Midnight – completed
The Hobbit – completed
Automania 13,650 (Range Rover)
Golden Baton – completed
Night Gunner 16,470 – mission 15
Beaky & the Egg Snatchers 13,000,000
Push Off 7,640
Urban Upstart – completed
Sabre Wulf 136,790 at 100%
Deathchase 96,736
The Fabulous Four, Grt. Harwood, Nr. Blackburn, Lancs.

Sabre Wulf – completed 111,270 at 76%
Deathchase 47,388
Yrban Upstart – completed
Casey Jones 61,800 at L14
Volcanic Planet 170,100
Pssst 52,305
Punchy 1,240,640
Zzoom 110,500
Cookie 24,055
Orion 9,730 – 72 captured
Spectipede 31,460
Gnasher 14,840
Harrier Attack 24,010
Cavelon 42,490
Ah Diddums – Box 12
Molar Maul – L24
Transversion 25,636 on L19
Chris Brown, Stockport, Cheshire

Penetrator 10,058,240
Garry Philip, Dunblane, Perthshire

Full Throttle – 1st on all tracks
Meteor Storm 137,940
Chuckie Egg 225,100 on L23
S.P. Janney (15), Sutton Coldfield, W. Midlands

CDS Pool 1990 on frame 5
Chequered Flag 52:54 at Cambridge Ring
Zzoom 400,000 odd
Peter Keen, Worthing, W. Sussex

CRL Handicap Golf – 57 on a 70 par course with three 'eagles' and seven 'birdies'!!
Sam Warwick, Newbury, Bucks

Plannet of Death completed in 1 lour 24 minutes
Patrick White, Shanklin I.O.W.

Moon Alert 32,700 on screen 2
Gareth Coombe, Milford Haven, Dyfed

Sabre Wulf 1,008,840 after 32½ hours
Paul A. Rosbotham, Wigan, Lancs.

But he found a clever way of cheating (P. Tips next month)

Atic Atac 3 minutes 32 seconds
Chequered Flag 56:34 at Silverstone
FUll Throttle 4th place
Tranz-Am 8 cups 3 minutes 42 seconds
Deathchase 62,420
A. Poulton, Spinney Hill, Warwick

Automania 144,007 and 85 cars
D. Brown North Shields, Tyne & Wear

Database Micro Olympics – 100m in 9.64; 200m in 22.60, 400m in 60.76 Long Jump – 7.74m, High Jump – 2.30m, Pole Vault – 4.65m, Discus – 67.05m, Javelin – 57.86m.
Michael Clancy (12), Northenden, Manchester

Jetpac 137,355
The Pyramid 126,625
Graham Joyes, Isleworth, Middlesex

Daley Thompson's Decathlon – Day 1 = 297,792; 100m, 9.84, Long Jump – 8.74m, Shot Putt – 27.76m, High Jump – 2.45m, 400m – 36.36. Day 2 = 545,415;110m, – 10.47, Pole Vault – 5.02m, Discus – 75,90m, Javelin – 128.40m, 1500m – 4:27.12
Charles Pilcher (13), Farnham, Surrey

Surely the all time high ANYWHERE for:
Chuckie Egg 10,338,990 after 2 days playing (with pause overnight) and after passing all 256 levels twice! After the 15 hour game and 1033 extra lives gained, there were 165 lives left.
Richard Mazzaferri (16), Aberdeen.

Send your hi-scores and photos (please) to THE HALL OF SLIME at the usual address. Pleas don't include any CRASH mail order items with letters to the Hall, Playing Tips or Forum as it may cause delays in delivery. The Hall of Slime is ONLY for real genuine creeps who want to show off. Cheating is hard to uncover, but we FROWN upon cheats!



PLAYING TIPS

Due to pressures on space this month, a somewhat shorter section than usual, but we'll make it up next month – honest! A couple of months back I asked you to send in photos of yourselves to go with the Hall of Slime. A few have trickled in, but real genuine creeps should be able to provide suitably slime-filled pics so that other readers know who to hate for getting that impossible score!

First off, a letter from **Matthew Rhodes** *of Bradford, W. Yorkshire, who is the author of Lothlorien's* Hyperblaster. *After thanking us for the review he goes on to say:*

Apart from aiming and pressing key 7 rapidly, I would recommend finishing the sheet with you near the centre, since the aliens start around the edge. I have had 99,175 on L37. Another tactic which I do not personally use would be to let one alien survive on a low sheet until the time runs out – but then you miss out on the other graphics. Personally, L16 aliens are my favourites. By the way – to shatter the belief that programmers are rolling in money, I have had to date only £14 in receipts (not from *Hyperblaster*), and I spent £12 on advertising!

S. Hennessy *of London Bow E3 writes:*

3D Lunattack – a very easy way to get to the Seiddab base without doing much damage to your ship is to lower the gunsight down to the bottom of the screen and follow the radar dodging everything in sight. This enables you to get to the base easier but takes something away from the game. *Ad Astra* – lift your ship about 1½ inches to 2 inches off the bottom so that the alien sweepers who come in with the main attack miss you. Aren't the between screen planets boring after a while? *Stonkers* – simply move your men and some tanks to the bridge head and wait, keeping them supplied and moving everything else to your port HQ. When the enemy reach you they are so depleted of power that you come out of the battle well on top. The remaining energy will go to the occupied base (usually only a few units left) where they are easy prey for your men. *Lords of Midnight* – –

Sorry, Mr. Hennessy – I'm not about to have Derek Brewster go for my throat again over another LOM tip!!

Quite a number of you have spotted a couple of things in Ocean's Cavelon. **Gary Davies** *of Coventry says:*

I thought I'd just tell you that you can turn off the continuous sound by pressing the letter T...

For Tune, presumably! Among many others **Chris Brown** *from Poynton, Stockport, Cheshire notes:*

If you're playing *Cavelon* press as many keys at once as you can. A message will come up on the screen saying HI CHRIS, WHAT DO YOU WANT...?

What Chris doesn't seem to have spotted though, is that this is the way into getting to play on whatever of the six screens you want. More details in the Xmas Special pokery corner. **T. Henry** *(letter of the month) also had this to say on the watery problem of* Worse Things Happen at Sea *by Silversoft:*

Just concentrate on keeping the first two areas left of the recharge chamber room clear of water. The ship's other 8 compartments will get completely filled by the time this happens you will arrive at port. True, you lose the cargo value but you won't lose any Droids. I found this worked on the first 2 levels but after that the main problem is to keep the engines from blowing up! The best thing to do is to grab all the sealing patches (and any oil cans) from the lower decks and replace the floor hatches once you're back on the top deck as there are too many holes and not enough patches. You will also find that if you keep the ship's wheel dead-centre the ship will make it to the other side quicker. Phew! This game is enough to put you off ships for life! Has anyone worked out any cheat POKEs to make life easier!?

Well, has anyone? By the way, who noticed PCG's 'exclusive' on Factory Breakout *playing tips? Pity we beat them a couple of months (Oh, you don't read PCG – sorry!) Anyway, back to WTHAS. More athletic, obviously, than T. Henry,* **Martin Blackburn** *from Ipswich, Suffolk says:*

Always plug the holes in the hold which is nearest where you start and work your way to the left end of the ship. Always keep the door that separates the place where you start with the next hold closed, which will always enable you to get more power. Plug all the holes and worry about pumping later.

That's generally a sound policy for life in general, Martin!

I owe one to **Dale Foster** *of Cawood, Selby, N. Yorks because he was the friend who had a bet with Simon Aspinall (Forum – September) that Simon's letter wouldn't get published. The bet cost him a quid! After writing in disgust at accusations that CRASH carries to many adverts, Dale has this to say about Chris Sutherland's* Lunar Jetman *POKE (which amazingly most people have complained doesn't work!!):*

After 6 attempts at this interesting program, I was pleased that it did work – thanks for an ace POKE, Chris! Finally two POKEs for *JSW* which also really work. To stop deaths by heights: **POKE 36477,1** and to obliterate all moving objects: **POKE 35123, Ø**. I was amazed when I first saw this one because in issue 6 you published a 6 line program which was meant to do this but didn't work! PS, there's a pound on this letter, so please, please print it!

I think that makes you quits with Simon, Dale.

Whilst on the subject of that egregious hacker **Chris Sutherland** *and to put the record straight after all those attacks on him in the Forum, he's been back at work again and sent in one of the most useful of programs for* Sabre Wulf *addicts who find Ultimate's QWERT and cursor key option uncomfortable. What the routine does is to overwrite the key option and allow the player to use the keys* **Q, Z, I, P,** *and* **N** *to fire. Chris says:*

Type in the program and then check you have entered the data correctly by entering directly:

RESTORE: LET S = Ø: FOR A=1 TO 52:READ A$: LET S=S+VAL A$: NEXT A: IF S< >7183 THEN PRINT "ERROR"

If no errors have been made SAVE the program onto a blank tape with:

SAVE "SABRE KEYS" LINE 1

and check it with **VERIFY ""**

The program isn't very long, yet only just fits into memory after the CLEAR statement had been executed. Here is the program:

```
1 POKE VAL "23693", VAL
  "71": BORDER SIN PI:
  CLEAR VAL "24575": FOR
  a=SIN PI TO VAL "3": LOAD
  ""CODE: PRINT AT VAL
  "19", SIN PI: INK SIN PI:
  NEXT a: POKE VAL "23436",
  VAL "2Ø1": RANDOMIZE
  USR VAL "23424"
2 For a=VAL "453Ø6" TO VAL
  "45357": READ a$: POKE a,
  VAL a$: NEXT a
3 DATA "14", "Ø", "62", "251",
  "219", "254", "24", "2", "Ø",
  "2Ø1", "2Ø3", "71", "32",
  "2", "2Ø3", "2Ø9", "62",
  "254", "219", "254", "2Ø3",
  "79", "32", "2", "2Ø3",
  "217", "62", "223"
4 DATA "219", "254", "2Ø3",
  "87", "32", "2", "2Ø3", "193",
  "2Ø3", "87", "32", "2",
  "2Ø3", "2Ø1", "62", "127",
  "219", "254", "23Ø", "8",
  "192", "2Ø3", "225", "2Ø1"
5 LOAD "3" CODE :
  RANDOMIZE USR VAL
  "24576"
```

3D Lunattack



PLAYING TIPS

If you find keeping the **N** key pressed is a strain on your thumb then you can select continuous sword waving by altering the 4th from end data item in line 4 from "192" to "2ØØ". You can now put **down** your sword by pressing **N**. This will, however, make it difficult to enter your initials on the hi-score table. Some people prefer the **M** key to the **N** one, so to change alter the 5th from end data item in line 4 from "8" to "4".

Once you are ready, load this short program, replace the cassette with *Sabre Wulf*, use RUN and ENTER and play the *Sabre Wulf* tape.

CRASH isn't a listings magazine, and presumably this means it is more difficult to get listings correct (as you pointed out on page 27, col 4 of issue 8). Thus if CRASH prints it wrongly then it will be (incorrectly) assumed that I am a hoaxer, and not a modest genius! to save my reputation, I would be happier it you checked the program before publishing it.

Well, Chris, I've checked it – AND IT WORKS! (I never did like the cursors or QWERT). I think I've even typed it out for the typesetters accurately (fingers crossed), and I'll try and see it's looked at properly before being stuck down. Listings are a bit of a nightmare. . . Before finishing, Chris has the following to say:

On a more simplistic note, for unlimited lives on Ocean's *Hunchback* (or Huntbug as I call it!) MERGE the basic loader and insert before the RANDOMIZE USR statement:

POKE 26888,Ø

Below is a POKE for *Kosmic Kanga*, perhaps it's still too early to publish it, but even with unlimited lives I still can't get past level 9. MERGE the BASIC loader and insert before the PRINT USR statement:

POKE 36212,Ø

Normally, with any other inferior magazine I would ask for some reward for such brilliant programs and POKEs. However, this is CRASH, and so I'll give these items with no obligation to send me anthing! This means that Roger (He who always has something in brackets between his names) Kean can keep his pocket money for this month. Thank you.

Christopher Sutherland, Inverness, Scotland

My breath is quite taken away, Chris, your generosity obviously knows no bounds – you obviously can't be Scottish despite the address!

Sorry there's room for no more this month, back next with more.

LM

BEST PLATFORM GAME
Title Producer

BEST MAZE GAME
Title Producer

BEST SHOOT EM UP
Title Producer

BEST (OVERALL) ARCADE GAME
Title Producer

BEST TEXT-ONLY ADVENTURE
Title Producer

BEST TEXT/GRAPHICAL ADVENTURE
Title Producer

BEST SIMULATION
Title Producer

BEST STRATEGY-SIMULATION
Title Producer

BEST WARGAME
Title Producer

BEST BOARD/CARD/PUZZLE GAME
Title Producer

BEST STATE OF THE ART AWARD
For the most outstanding progamming achievement of 1984
Title Producer

BUMMER OF THE YEAR
For the most outstandingly bad game of 1984
Title Producer

BEST UTILITY PROGRAM
Title Producer

BEST HARDWARE ADD-ON
Title Producer

BEST LOOKING ADVERT TO APPEAR IN A MAGAZINE
For a Spectrum product
Ad title (or description) Company

VOTING TIME EXTENDED!

CRASH READERS AWARDS

Most of the categories are self-explanatory, but by **Strategy/Simulation** we mean games like **Dictator, Dallas** etc.

You do not have to vote in every category if you cannot think of anything suitable, but obviously, the more you do fill in the better.

Forms should be returned to **CRASH READERS AWARDS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB** to arrive no later than **Friday 23rd November** when the draw will be made.

Name ....

Address ....

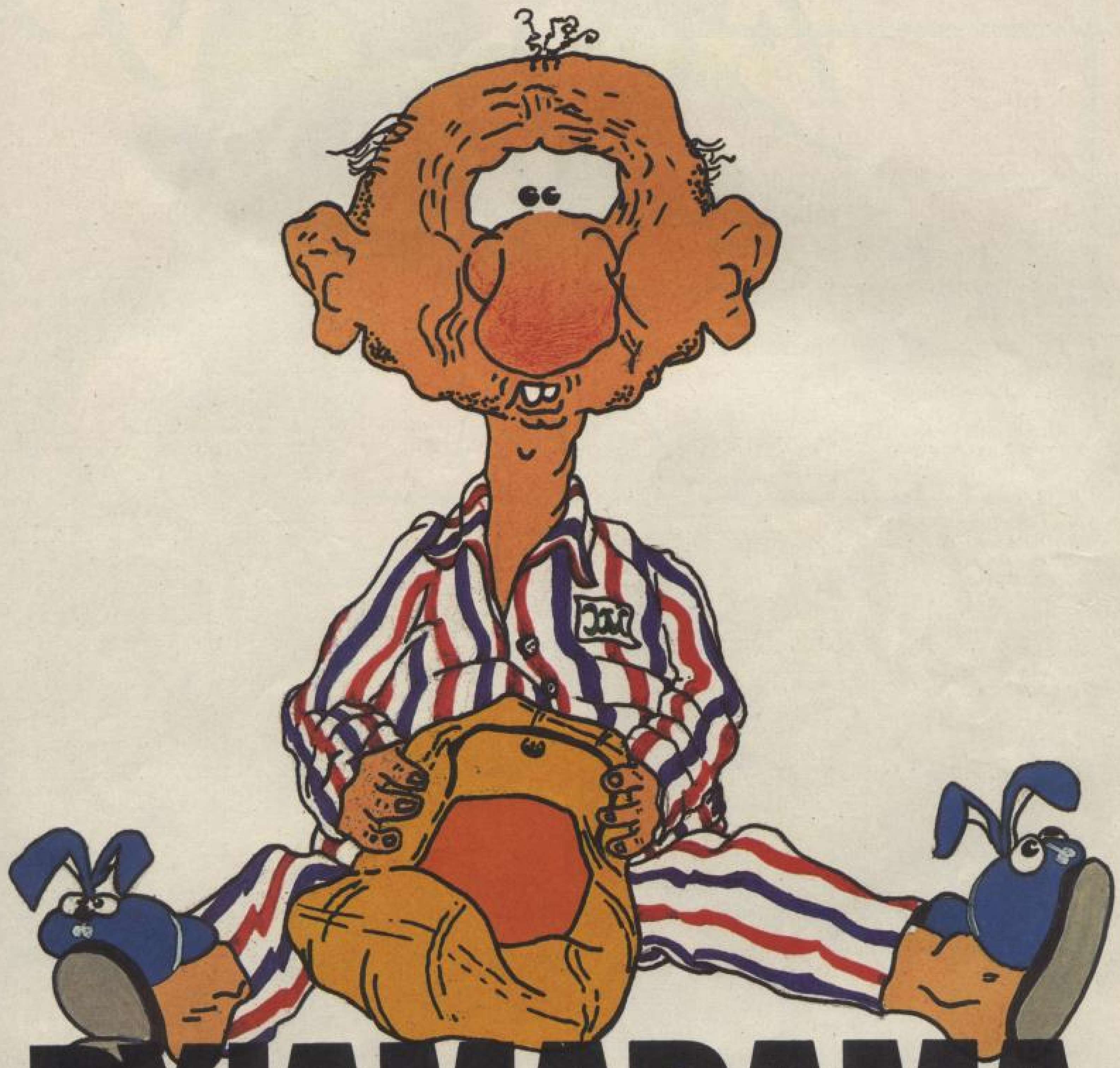
....

Postcode ....

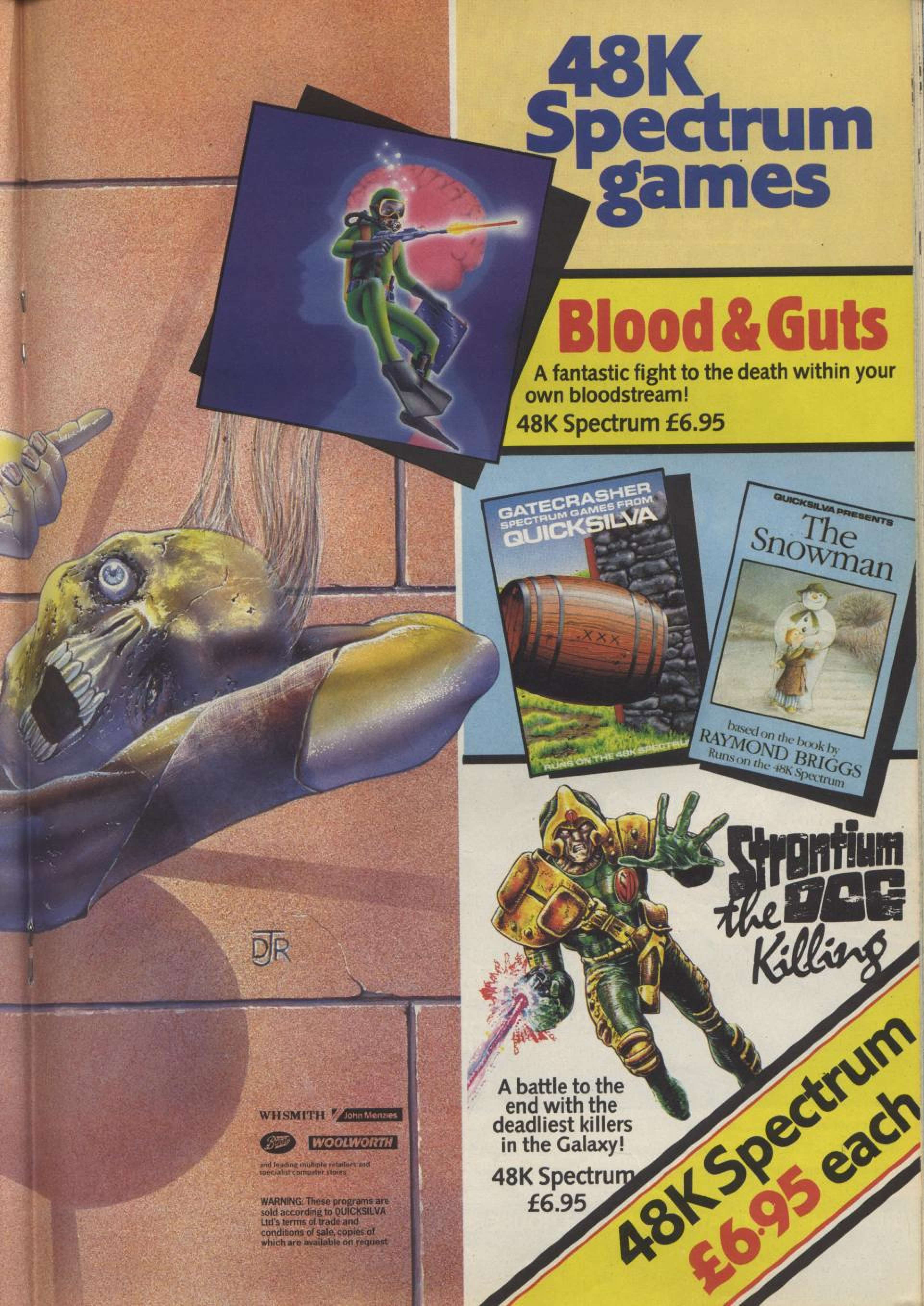
Voting Form

Please cut this page from the magazine (or send a photocopy if you prefer – we will accept written entries on your own paper as well as long as they are laid out in the same manner as this form) and send it back to us as soon as possible. **Don't forget to put your name and address on the form in clear handwriting!**

In each category please enter the name of the game/product and the producer for which y ou wish to vote. Please note; games **must** have a copyright date of 1984 to be elligible. The collated results will be presented as a winner of the award with two runners-up.



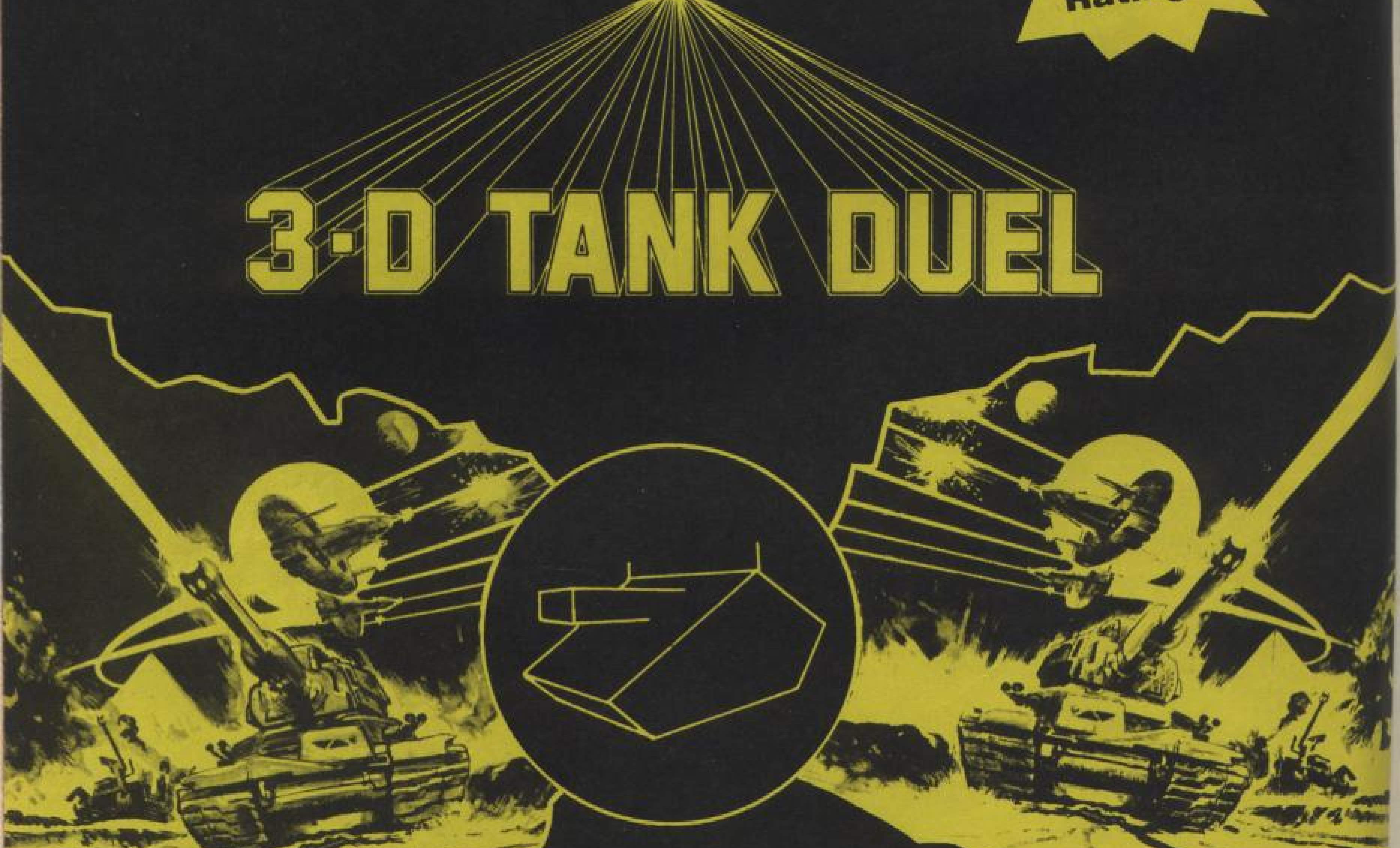

A prophecy is about to be fulfilled. The Dead will rise again to eat the flesh of the living...
Zombie Zombie
From the authors of ANT ATTACK, Sandy White and Angela.
Softsolid 3D* from SPACEMAN
*Patent pending
48K Spectrum £6.95
All titles available from
QUICKSILVA
Quicksilva Mail Order, P.O. Box 6, Wimborne, Dorset BA21 7PY.
Telephone (0202) 891744.



48K Spectrum games
Blood & Guts
A fantastic fight to the death within your own bloodstream!
48K Spectrum £6.95
GATECRASHER
SPECTRUM GAMES FROM QUICKSILVA
RUNS ON THE 48K SPECTRUM
QUICKSILVA PRESENTS
The Snowman
based on the book by
RAYMOND BRIGGS
Runs on the 48K Spectrum
Strontium Dog
the Killing
A battle to the end with the deadliest killers in the Galaxy!
48K Spectrum
£6.95
48K Spectrum £6.95 each
DJR
WHSMITH
John Menzies
Boots
WOOLWORTH
and leading multiple retailers and specialist computer stores
WARNING: These programs are sold according to QUICKSILVA Ltd's terms of trade and conditions of sale, copies of which are available on request.

REALTIME SOFTWARE

83% CRASH Rating!



**FOR THE ZX SPECTRUM 48K
SINCLAIR, KEMPSTON
AND CURSOR JOYSTICK
COMPATIBLE**

Please send me__________copy/copies
of 3D TANK DUEL at £5.50 each (post and packing free)
Cheques/p.o. payable to REALTIME SOFTWARE

Name__________
Address__________
____
Postcode__________

REALTIME SOFTWARE, PROSPECT HOUSE, 32 SOVEREIGN STREET, LEEDS LS1 4BJ

Crash Competition

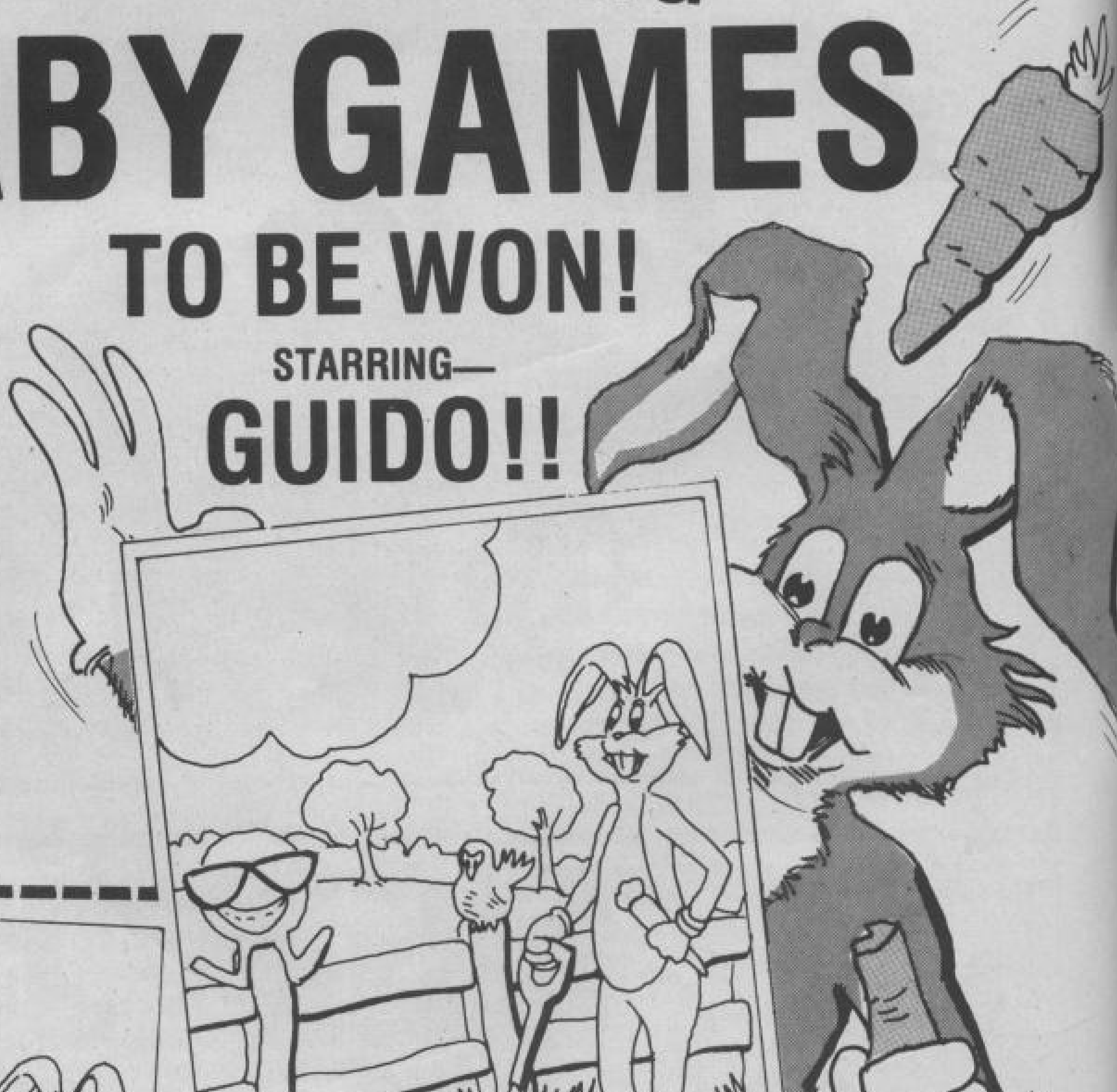
50 CARROT-CRUNCHING, RABBIT-RAVENING BLABY GAMES TO BE WON!

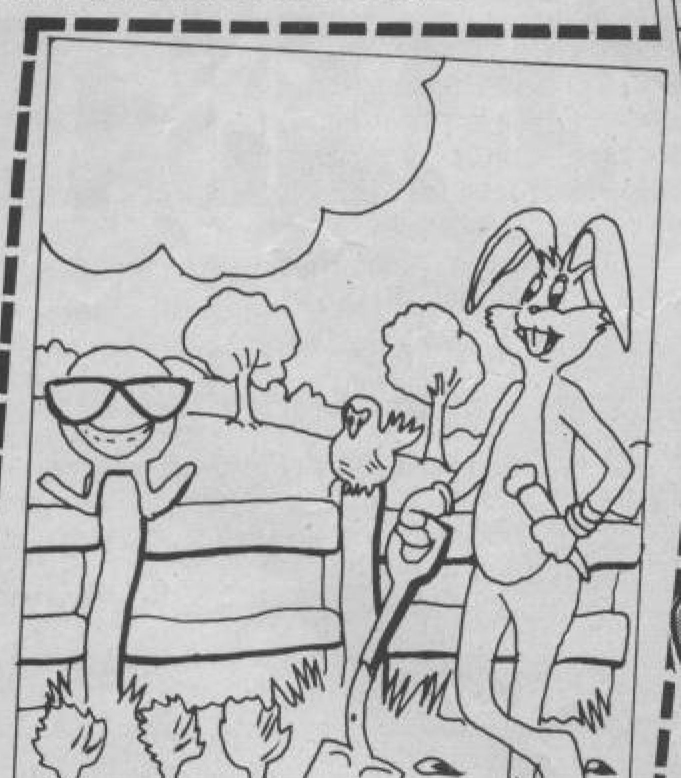
STARRING— GUIDO!!

GUIDO is one of the newest releases from **Blaby Computer Games** at a new budget price. **Blaby** has been in the software business for nearly three years and featured as a CRASH profile in our very first issue. They supply all the major distributors such as W. H. Smith, John Menzies, Thorn EMI, Terry Blood and Lightning Records.

Blaby say they are putting most of their existing range of games into packs, plus a lot of new titles such as *Guido*, *Icicle Works*, *Hubert* and *Tron*. These packages will be available at many newsagents throughout Britain, through the makers of Slush Puppy, who have just signed a deal with Blaby.

But there's no need to go and buy an icy drink to get *Guido*. All you have to do is spot the differences between the two seemingly identical versions of *Guido's* cover below (there are 12 differences – see how generous we are) and send in the form. The first 50 correct entries pulled from the ever expanding CRASH bag will each receive a copy of **GUIDO** from Blaby Computer Games. Entries should be sent to: **GUIDO COMPETITION, CRASH MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB** to arrive no later than first post **November 22**.





Name ....
Address ....
....
Postcode ....

Please fill in this form and circle the 12 differences in biro on the drawing above this form.

5 WINNING CLASSICS FROM MICROMEGA

AT £6.95 EACH FOR THE SPECTRUM



BRAXX BLUFF

Our ultimate 3D program — the multi-screen mission to save the dying crawler crew trapped at Braxx Bluff. Undock and land, walk in search of the crawler, drive it through the marsh, the ruins and the desert — one track wrong and you are dead! — skim the rocky seas at top speed . . . the natives are after your energy, but caution costs time and the crew are dying. There never was a cockpit-view mission like the one to Braxx Bluff!

FULL THROTTLE



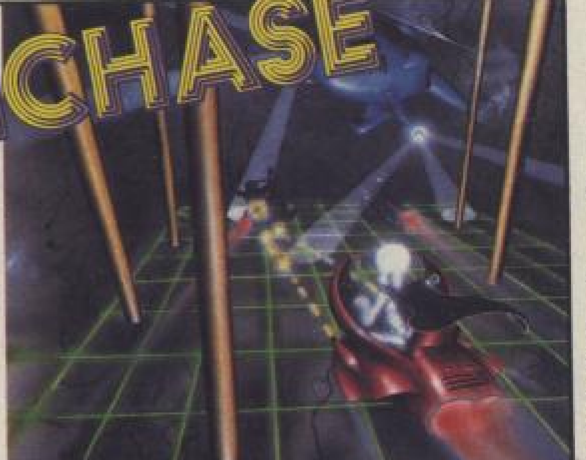
Full Throttle places you on the saddle of a 500cc Grand Prix motorcycle. You can choose to race on any of ten of the world's top racing circuits. As a newcomer, you are started at the back of the grid in a field of 40 bikes. You have the best bike in the race, but that alone will not help you!



Codename MAT

MAT is mankind's last hope! The desperate plan to place in the mind of a teenager the combined tactical skills of all the planetary leaders in the solar system. Now your mind is MAT's mind. Take control of the USS Centurion Battle Cruiser and Tactical Command Centre to control the planetary defence fleets against the Myon attacks in MISSION: ALIEN TERMINATION.

DEATHCHASE



3D as you have never seen before on your Spectrum! £6.95 will put you right on the saddle of the Big Bike! Ride deep into the forest through day and night, chasing the enemy riders. Weeve through the trees at breakneck speed and watch out for helicopters and tanks — the greatest prizes of all!



Kentilla

Where netherbeast Grako is building his power. There's much to discover and dangers abound. Free-moving agents may help you or hinder, but might be befriended if ways can be found. The alchemist lore-work was false and a failure, but renders good service in different vein, vanquished aggressors might be your protector. In perilous places of dark, death and pain. Of devious problems and magical task, this song is a warning, a riddle, a clue. To Caraland's saviour it offers a little, So mark well its lines for the saviour is you . . .

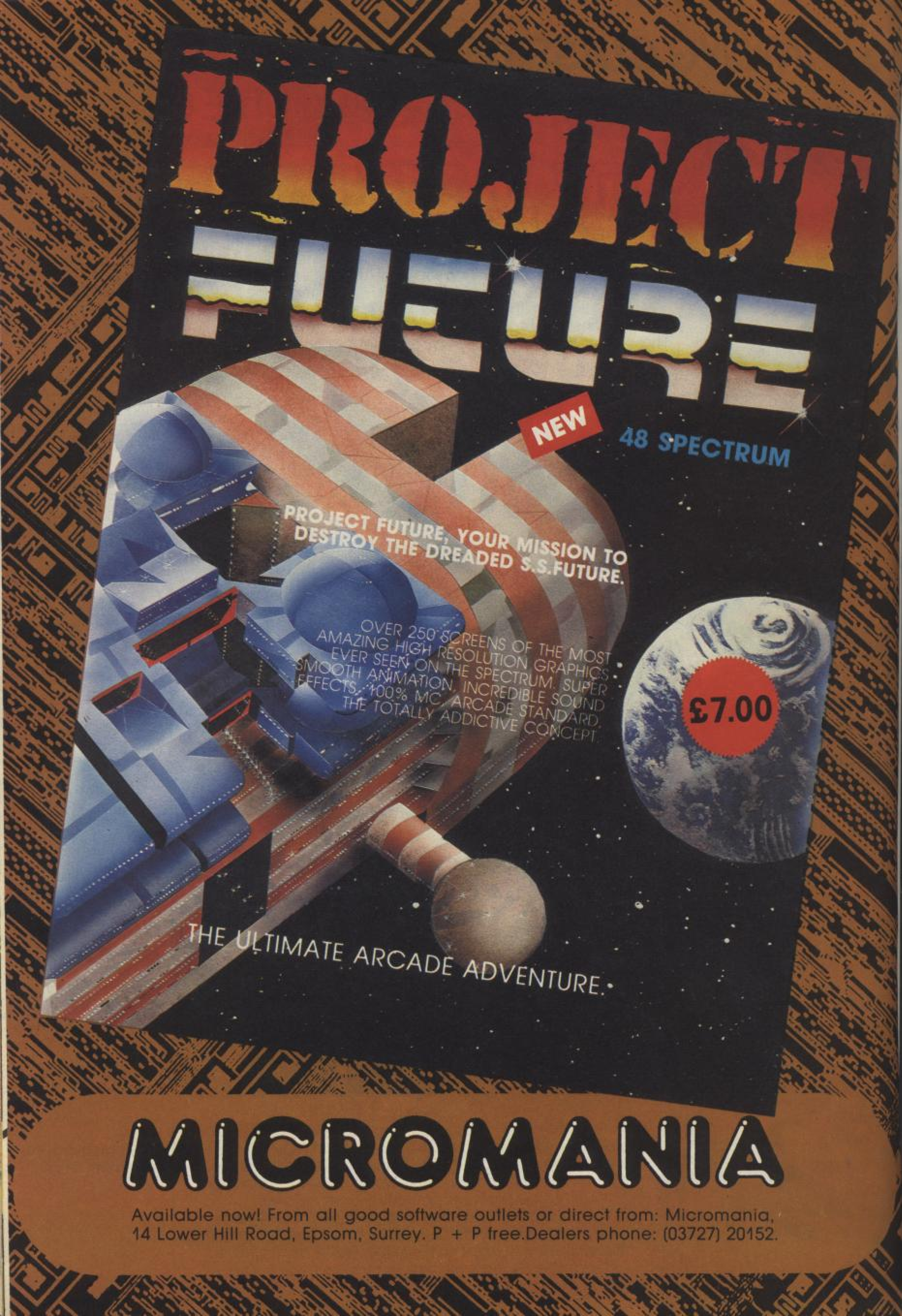
Selected titles available through larger branches of

Boots
John Menzies
spectrum
WOOLWORTH

JUST RELEASED

JASPER

For the 48K Spectrum the most amazing arcade adventure yet, with 22 screens of stunning cartoon animated graphics seeing is believing — see the advertisement in this issue now.

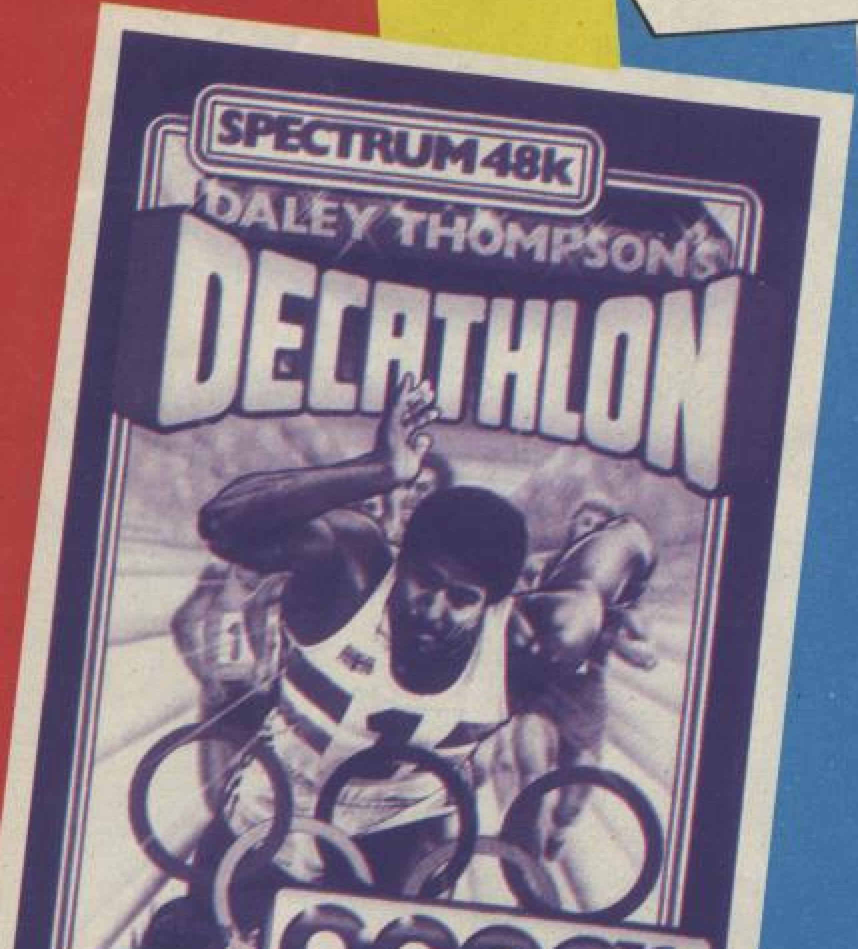

PROJECT
FUTURE
NEW
48 SPECTRUM
PROJECT FUTURE, YOUR MISSION TO DESTROY THE DREADED S.S.FUTURE.
OVER 250 SCREENS OF THE MOST AMAZING HIGH RESOLUTION GRAPHICS EVER SEEN ON THE SPECTRUM. SUPER SMOOTH ANIMATION, INCREDIBLE SOUND EFFECTS, 100% MC, ARCADE STANDARD, THE TOTALLY ADDICTIVE CONCEPT.
£7.00
THE ULTIMATE ARCADE ADVENTURE.
MICROMANIA
Available now! From all good software outlets or direct from: Micromania, 14 Lower Hill Road, Epsom, Surrey. P + P free.Dealers phone: (03727) 20152.


THE HUNCH IS BACK
Your favourite bell ringer, the all-conquering Quasimodo, leaps back into action on another breathtaking epic with Esmerelda! Another superb Ocean extravanganza!
HUNCHBACK II
QUASIMODO'S REVENGE
SPECTRUM 48k
6-90
COMMODORE 64
7-90
ocean
Ocean House
6 Central Street
Manchester M2 5NS
Tel: 061 832 6633
Ocean Software is available from selected branches of: WOOLWORTH, WHSMITH, John Menzies, Boots, LASKYS, Rumbelows
Spectrum Shops and all good software dealers. Trade enquiries welcome.

Crash Competition

DALEY THOMPSON INVITES YOU TO GET FIT WITH OCEAN!!

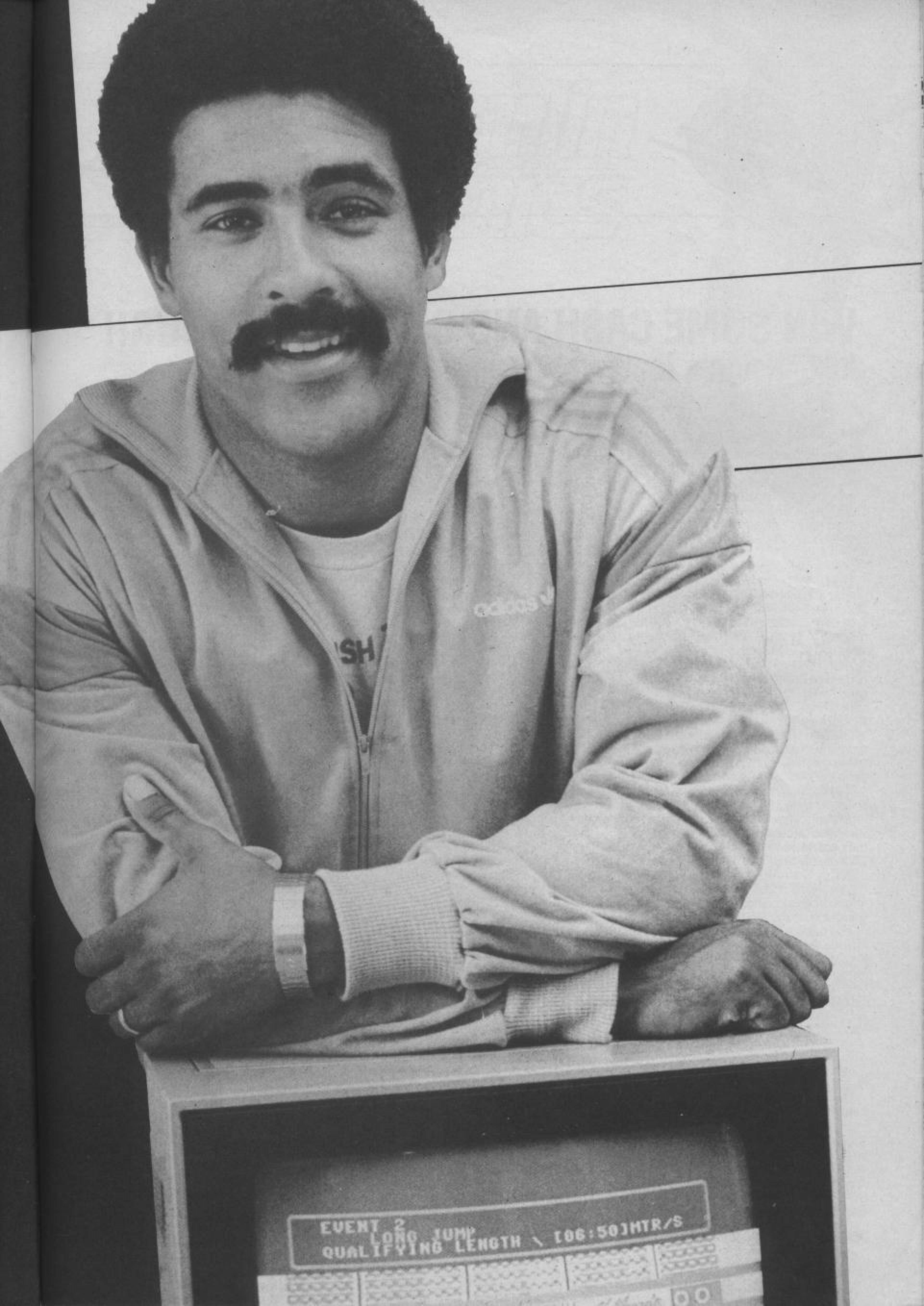
50 copies of DALEY THOMPSON'S DECATHLON to be won, and for the first ten an exclusive OCEAN SPORTS BAG to go with it!



In the Olympics the **Decathlon** is one of the most demanding events, a gruelling test designed to split the men from the boys, and **OCEAN** have made sure that their game is just as exhausting on you and your joystick – as the CRASH team discovered (**DALEY THOMPSON'S DECATHLON** was the game chosen to put joysticks to the real test, and we found they had to **be** built to survive)!!

Luckily you don't need muscles or stamina to win this test, a bit of brain power will do (after all you **could** win a bag to put your brain and broken joysticks in!). Answer the following questions and send them to us on a postcard to: **DECATHLON COMPETITION, CRASH MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB** to arrive by first post **November 22**. The first fifty correct answers pulled from the bag will each receive a copy of Ocean's Daley Thompson's Decathlon, and additionally, the first ten will each receive an Ocean Sports Bag.

1. What ten events make up the Decathlon?
2. Which medal did Daley Thompson win at the Olympics?
3. Where will the next Olympic Games be held?
4. Did the Olympic Games originate in
   a) Crete?
   b) Italy?
   c) Greece?
   d) Macedonia?


adidas
EVENT 2
LONG JUMP
QUALIFYING LENGTH \ [06:50]MTR/S

Crash Competition

WIN SOME CASH AND BECOME FAMOUS!!

Just design a loading screen

That's the offer from Britain's brightest new software house, **GREMLIN GRAPHICS.** As you will have noticed by now, Gremlin Graphics is an aliterative company (no that doesn't mean they can't spell, read or write – it means the two words forming their name both start with the same letter!) and its games carry on the same tradition with titles like *Potty Pigeon* and *Monty Mole.*

Now Gremlin have invented a new character called **BEAVER BOB.** Now Bob is pretty special because he's been dreamed up exclusively for CRASH readers to get their teeth into (before he's released to the world at large). All Gremlin know about Bob is that his name is Beaver Bob! It's up to you to decide what he really looks like – and in a very special way. MORE ABOUT BEAVER BOB IN A MO. . . .

Gremlin Graphics have made a rather stunning impact on Spectrum games, coming almost from nowhere, it seems, to hit the number one spot with *Wanted: Monty Mole.* Their CBM64 *Potty Pigeon* will soon be appearing on the Spectrum too. *Monty Mole's* success was assured when the game was featured on the national news broadcasts on Wednesday 25th of July because of the caricature in it of Arthur Scargill, the mineworkers union leader. But the game would not have survived as a chart hit if it were not a good one as well as being newsworthy.

The people behind Gremlin Graphics include **Tony Crowther,** best known for his Commodore 64 games (and *Potty Pigeon*); there is also **Geoff Brown,** who besides being Gremlin's Managing Director, is also the MD of Centresoft/US Gold; and then there is **Ian Stewart** who looks after the sales and marketing angles – like thinking up names, Beaver Bob for instance! And most importantly there is **Kevin Norburn** who signs the cheques (Financial Director)!

Now Beaver Bob is an embryonic hero (which doesn't mean he wears his knickers outside his trousers like Superman – it simply means he hasn't been born yet). What Gremlin Graphics would like from enterprisingg CRASH reader/designers is a LOADING SCREEN for a new game to feature Beaver Bob.

What to do

First of all you must decide what Beaver Bob should look like, and a good place to start might be a nature book with some pictures of real beavers if you can find one. Perhaps Oliver Frey's illustration will provide some help. The next place to look might be the loading screen of *Monty Mole* to get some idea of how an animal can be given recognisably human characteristics. The next thing to do is get out pencils and paper and start doing some drawings of your Beaver Bob and his surroundings from which you will be able to design the final screen. At this stage no one knows what the game will be about, so you will have to use some imagination if you feel it's important to add some possible game content to the background of the screen – and don't forget the title either!

Then it's time to get out all those graphics designer utilities you have been buying for months. Of course, if you think you're up to the job, why not work directly without the aid of a DRAW utility? The astonishing quality of graphics we have seen in the Sabre Wulf map competition has convinced us at CRASH that there are loads of people out there with the ability to knock spots off the professionals!

What you get out of it

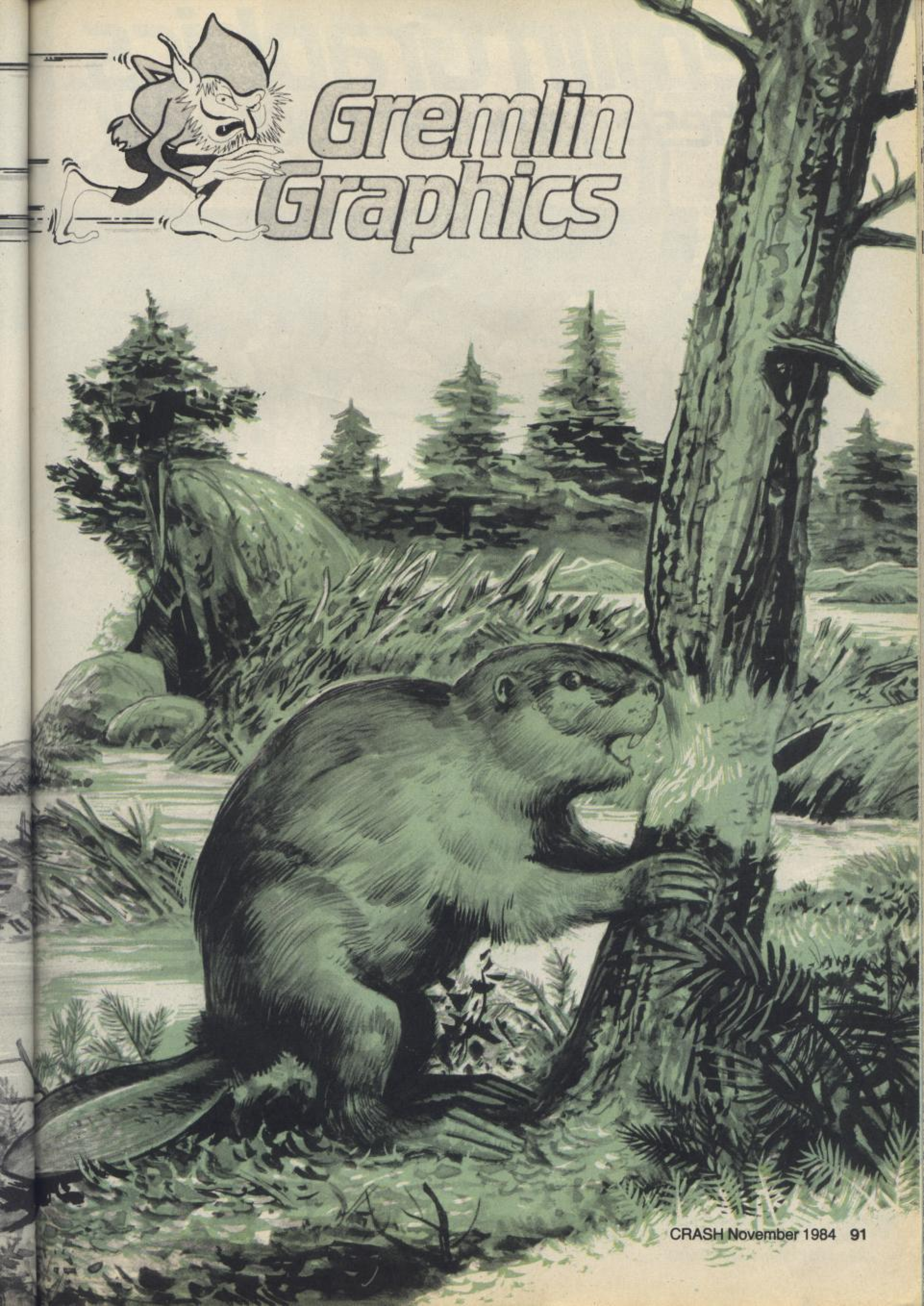
No one is asking entrants to design a game here, only the loading screen, BUT in doing that you will also be determining what Gremlin Graphics next superhero will look like. In return for that they are willing to part with hard earned cash! **£100** for the winning design and **£25** for each of two runners-up. After that 15 further runners-up will receive free the latest game from Gremlin. The winner will not only be a richer person – he or she will also become famous because Gremlin Graphics will place the winner's photograph beside that of the game programmer on Beaver Bob's inlay card.

How to enter

All entries to the competition must be in the form of a finished loading screen program on tape cassette. Although CRASH is administering the competition, the judging will be done by staff and members of Gremlin Graphics and their decision will be final. Gremlin Graphics reserve all rights to the content and design of the entries selected as winners of prizes.

Entries must be sent to **GREMLIN COMPETITION, CRASH MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB** to arrive no later than first post **November 30.** Entrants who would like their cassettes returned should enclose a suitable packet already stamped and addressed.





Gremlin Graphics

Gremlin Graphics
buy these games at your peril!

Two new games to drive you as potty as Percy, as mad as Monty packing in as much excitement and nerve racking tension as anything you can buy. The first launch from a new company whose design team have already shown themselves to be masters of games planning, graphic and sound effects.

Tony Crowther

One of today's brightest and most successful games developers, author of such outstanding hits as Loco, Blagger and Son of Blagger. A "Crowther Classic" is not just a game but an enthralling opportunity to challenge one of the liveliest minds in modern games computing circles.

Peter Harrap

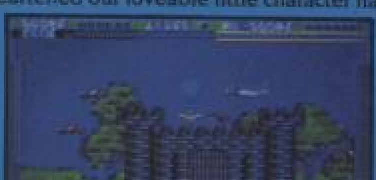
A sparkling new approach from a fresh face to Spectrum programming. His Monty Mole has created outstanding interest and received fine reviews from games "buffs", national press, radio and television.



Percy the Potty Pigeon – Make a suicide journey with our fluffy little friend Percy in his desperate attempts to build himself a cosy little home. Plunging to near certain destruction this crazy little bird has to pluck ten nest building twigs from the path of onrushing traffic, frantically avoiding the unwelcome attentions of a pigeon eating cat and starving ferret. Once off the tarmac the danger doesn't end as Percy carefully avoids the kamikaze planes, balloons and twig snatching sparrows before he can complete his nest and move to next level. But don't be totally disheartened our loveable little character has a few surprises of his own in the shape of revolting explosive eggs.

Wanted Monty Mole – Facing a long cold winter Monty Mole makes a daring, coal snatching raid to his local South Yorkshire pit. Grabbing a miner's bucket he heads into the darkness on his illicit escapade, soon to realise that the flu may have been a better choice. Alas there's no turning back. Onward to do battle with flying pickets, mammal eating fish, trundling coal crushers, roaming coal drills, filling his bucket dodging the disappearing floor. With his bucket filled, Monty makes his escape only to surface in Arthur's castle with this most imposing of leaders barring his way seated on his graphite throne. Cleverly seizing his only chance of toppling the great man, Monty collects the secret ballot papers and vote casting scroll. But Arthur's no fool when it comes to the heavy stuff and his personal bodyguard of super fit pickets and deadly flying hairsprays put up an almighty struggle with our valiant Mole.

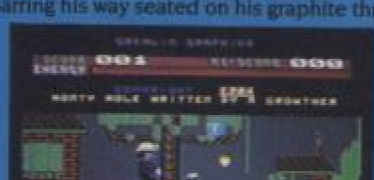
***COMING SOON!* Potty Pigeon on Spectrum 48K**



Potty Pigeon Commodore 64 £7.95



Monty Mole Spectrum 48K £6.95



Monty Mole Commodore 64 £7.95

If you can stand the nerve tingling excitement get your game from all good computer dealers.

For amazing graphics and outstanding sound effects run a gremlin through your micro.

Gremlin Graphics, Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS. Telephone: (0742) 753423

Gremlin Graphics

Reviews

RIVER RAID

Producer: **Activision**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Language: **Machine code**
Author: **Carol Shaw**

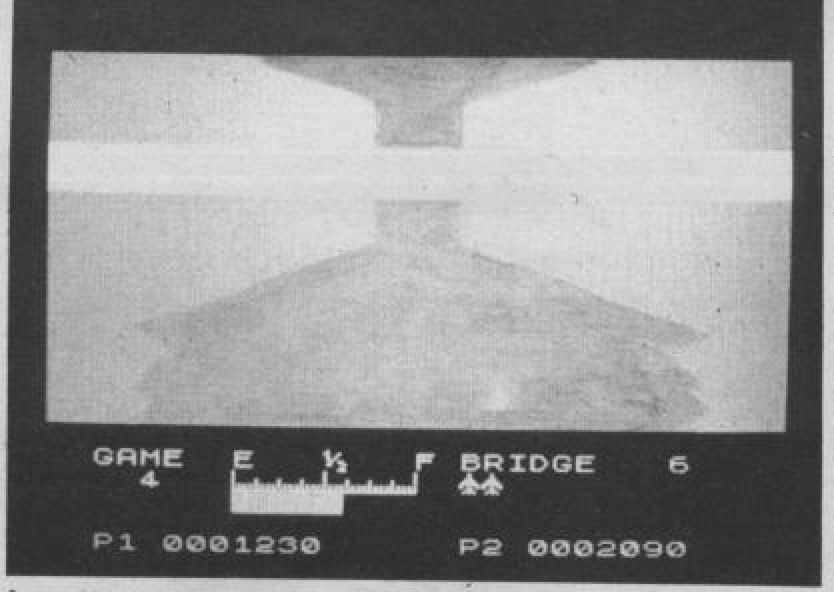
Christmas 1984 will be the time when all those American games arrive at last on the Spectrum. Activision seem to have taken a long while to turn their attention to the smaller computers, and have now done so with a vengeance! Adapting their 'Atari River Raid' program has been one of the first jobs. Set on the River of No Return, this scrolling shoot em up is described as a mission to score as many points as possible by destroying enemy battleships, helicopters, fuel depots, jets, land tanks, hot air ballons and bridges before your jet crashes or runs out of fuel. Well that seems pretty straightforward!

The river is described by green banks on either side and blue water in the middle. The landscape scrolls vertically down the screen with your jet centred. Movement is possible left and right and the jet may be speeded up or slowed down, which effectively speeds up the scrolling.

There is only one skill level but the game is played as a series of bridges. The more bridges you pass, the harder life becomes. The river is dotted with islands, some of them very large, and sometimes it narrows down so much that you are flying along a tiny zig zag route. Basically you must not touch any object (including the land) except fuel depots. The fuel runs out at a constant speed regardless of flying speed and is topped up by flying over the fuel depots. The slower you fly over them, the more fuel you get. They, too, can be blown up by firing missiles. The bridges which divide up the playing levels must be destroyed. Land tanks which can be seen crossing the bridges ahead of you will start firing back after bridge 7. For players who have reached a reasonable level of skill, it is possible to skip some of the first, easier bridges.

CRITICISM

● 'The scrolling landscape in this game is very effective in producing the impression of movement. What the game seems to lack is realism in details like the enemy craft – they seem a little flat? Also, I've heard of working your way up to a skill level (or bridge level in this case) but on my second game I already flew past bridge 43! Colour and sound have been well used and work well – no attribute problems. Overall, a good shoot em up game with plenty to keep you happy on higher screens; although perhaps a little over-priced.'



Approaching one of the bridges in RIVER RAID. Sadly the blue and green don't reproduce too well in black and white.

● *'In this adaption of Activision's Atari* River Raid, *the landscape scrolls vertically and the graphics are fairly small but adequate. The game builds up as you progress with fuel harder to find and more enemy craft shooting back at you. At first I thought it was a bit tame, but as things progressed the game built up, becoming harder all the time. An excellent feature is that of being able to start at several points – pro arcaders need waste no time and start at bridge 20. Pretty damn good stuff!'*

● 'The one thing that all Activision games suffer from is price, they're all just too expensive for what they offer, even though they are quite good games. *River Raid* is no exception to this. The game is good but I thought expensive. The graphics are small but smooth and the sound is quite good. The result is a very good shoot em up which is fun to play and reasonably challenging – it's certainly addictive and should keep you occupied for many a day. The menu options are excellent, especially for starting at different difficulties.'



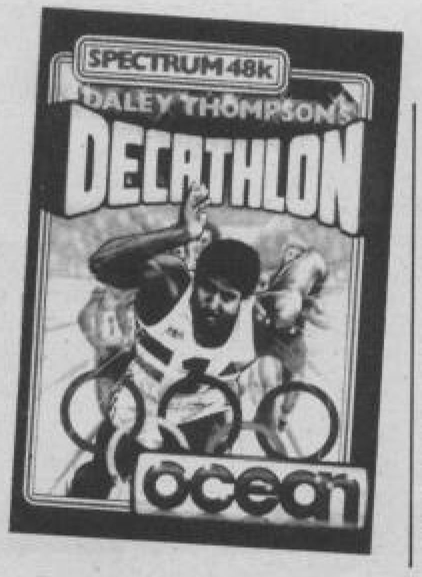
COMMENTS

Control keys: 2/W accelerate/slow down, O/P left/right, bottom row letters to fire
Joystick: Sinclair, Kempstone, Protek, AGF
Keyboard play: good positions and responsive
Use of colour: good
Graphics: smallish, smooth, generally reasonable
Sound: well used
Special features: optional start level and two-player games
General rating: good to very good, addictive but perhaps a lower value for money due to price.

Use of computer	73%
Graphics	74%
Playability	78%
Getting started	82%
Addictive qualities	72%
Value for money	66%
Overall	**74%**

DALEY THOMPSON'S DECATHLON

Producer: **Ocean**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£6.90**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Paul Ownes & Christian Urquhart**



The arcade original 'Track and Field' has spawned a number of Spectrum versions in this Olympics year and has led to a serious discussion on whether Spectrum keyboards or joysticks are up to it! Perhaps the most eagerly awaited version is this one, and Ocean (obviously good at picking winners) were in no doubt that Daley would get the gold, conveniently releasing the CBM64 version the day after he did.

There are, as the word 'decathlon' implies, ten events to compete in. On the first day – 100 metres, Long jump, Shotput, High jump and 400 metres. On the second day – 110 metres Hurdles, Discus, Pole-vault, Javelin and finally the joystick killing 1500 metres.



Doesn't look too good, the crowd are cheering but Daley's not happy with that one.



In the Spectrum version there is only one competitor on the track events (two in the CBM64 version). The screen has score lines and qualifiers at the top, a band showing the spectators, who cheer and clap, a narrow band representing the edge of the stand with Ocean hoardings plastered all over it, and then the green of the track area with the red running track. Below is a speed bar and result line with time and distance displayed. Track events are played by continuous left/right motions of the joystick, with the addition of fire for jumping or throwing. The simple object is to win the gold medal by qualifying in all events.

The package comes with day one on side one of the tape, and day two on the reverse. Ocean are paying royalties from sales of the game to the British Amateur Athletics Board.

CRITICISM

● 'Despite the Spectrum version appearing long after the Olympics had finished, *Decathlon* loses no appeal. The graphics are very good and there are no attribute problems. My only gripe (not a green thing with seeds in the middle) is that Daley is white. I don't know whether Chris Urquhart is colour blind but to say the very least, Daley Thompson has got a sun tan. The sound is excellent and plays a snippet from 'Chariots of Fire' when you win gold! This is an extremely good game. The keys respond so well you don't have to bash hell out of them. If you want a decathlon game, then get this one, it will keep you busy for months. In all an excellent buy.'

● *'I hate to compare versions across computers but the Spectrum version is a direct copy of the CBM version although it's very much more simplified, and the fact that you are only competing against yourself lowers its playability considerably. The graphics are all pretty good, with nice animation from you as Daley, and the parallax movement does help create a sense of depth. There are also the nice touches like the man coming in with tape to measure your performance. I must say, though, that I wasn't all that inspired overall, perhaps it's the very type of game that put me off slightly, but there's no doubt that this is the best Spectrum 'Track and Field' type game around.'*

● 'This (yet another Olympic spin-off game) is a very good sport program, probably the best of its type yet. (I'm sure I said that about the last one, but superlatives keep appearing!) I really enjoyed *Decathlon*, it was a very playable game, and there were nice finishing touches to it, for example, the false starts and the athlete scratching his head when he makes a mistake. I cannot really fault the graphics as they are well up to standard.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: user-definable, three needed for left/right foot and jump
Joystick: Kempston, Sinclair, Cursor
Keyboard play: very responsive
Use of colour: excellent – though Daley's stopped being ethnic
Graphics: very good, smooth, large, and well detailed
Sound: good tunes, applause etc
Skill levels: (match your own)
Lives: 4
Screens: 10 events
General rating: very good, addictivity will depend on individual taste for this type of game

Use of computer	85%
Graphics	82%
Playability	85%
Getting started	80%
Addictive qualities	80%
Value for money	78%
Overall	**82%**

The all round good sport and White Man, Daley Thompson, away to a good start in the 100m.



COMBAT LYNX

Producer: Durell
Memory required: 48K
Retail price: £7.95
Language: machine code

Combat Lynx is more of a simulation than a shoot em up, but it can certainly be played like a shoot em up (it has some ferocious battles) or as a game a stealthy strategy. It is also a fairly complicated program to get the hang of initially and comes complete with detailed instructions on the large inlay.

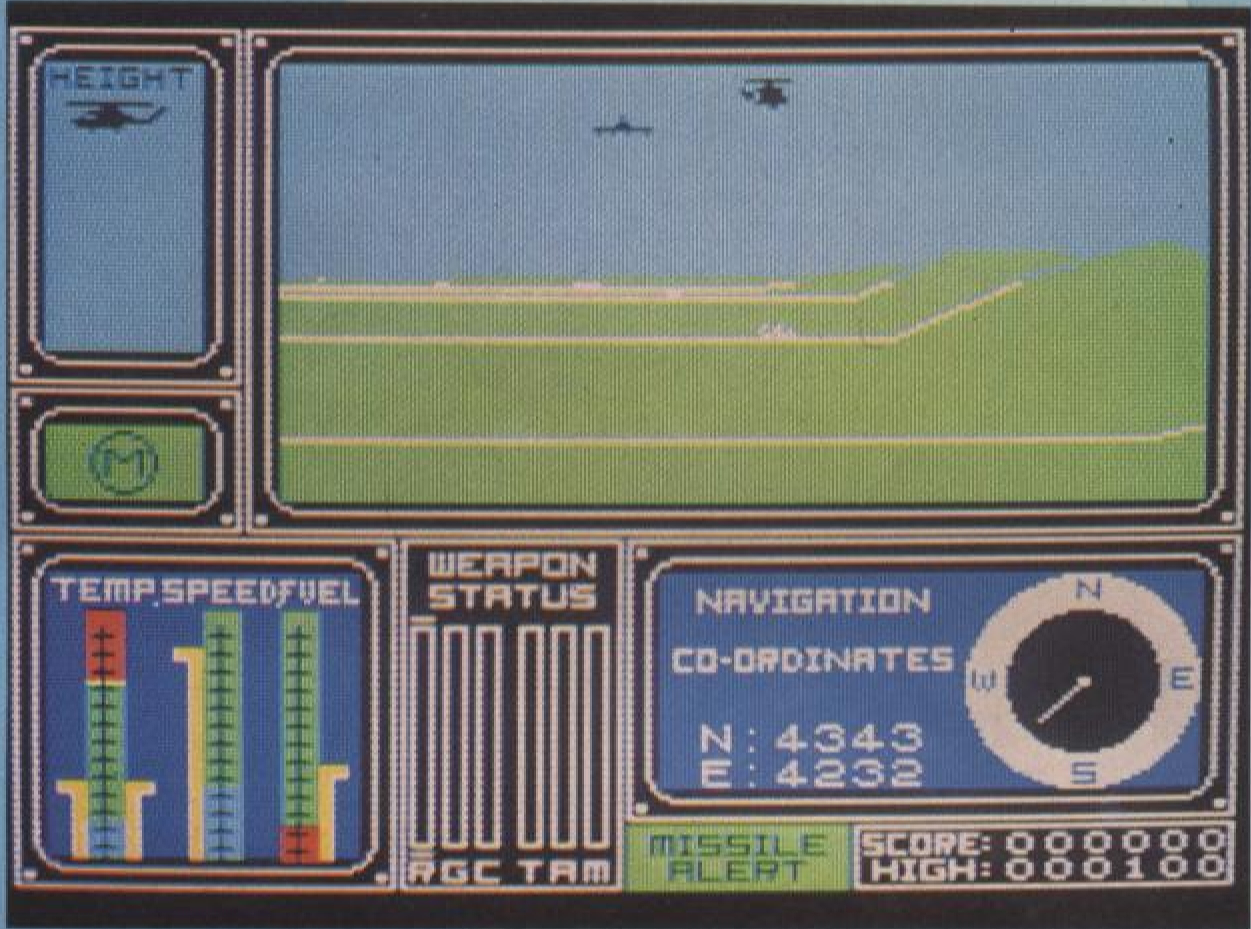
The Combat Lynx is a powerful, heavily armed helicopter, which you control in a game with 4 skill levels. As it says in the inlay, the most skilled players will be able to protect their bases with mines, support forward bases under attack with air cover and fresh troops, and also intercept and destroy enemy vehicles (land and air) while in flight between bases. A game could last for five seconds or five hours depending on the dexterity and tactical skill of the player.

Depending on the chosen skill level there are between three and six bases which you must support with fresh troops and air cover. Base zero has an endless supply of fuel and weapons and can instantly revitalise injured troops brought in from other bases. The first task is to arm the helicopter. The screen shows plans of the Lynx in three dimensions, front, side and top. Below are the prompts which tell you what is being selected, how much of it and its weight. This includes able-bodied soldiers, injured soldiers, weapons and fuel. The load is carefully calculated and shown against the maximum weight possible, and planning is required since you must be able to take onthe necessary weight of fuel for the trip. Weapons include Strafing rockets, cannon and machine gun pods, all of which just fire in the direction the helicopter points in; and then there are the HOT weapons which are wire guided anti-tank weapons; heat seeking anti-aircraft missiles which can be fired without aiming; and finally the mines, which can be deposited around base perimeters.

The playing screen is split up into four prime areas; a main

A Crash Smash

C·O·M·B·A·T L·Y·N·X



The LYNX takes avoiding action as an enemy jet comes in to attack

display window in which you can see the lynx flying over the landscape and the positions of enemy vehicles, bases, etc.; a **height** above ground indicator; **message text** display; and the **instrument panel** which shows engine temperature, speed of flight and fuel, weapon status and selection, navigation co-ordinates in the form of a compass and map grid reference, missile launch warning and finally the score line. Switching to map alters the main display from the 3D view to the very large map area. This indicates contour heights, shows enemy positions and friendly bases, Lynx's present position and is broken into grids for ease of reference. The objects shown on the map are last intelligence report positions – they may move and can be seen moving on an update basis. When flying, the joystick/keyboard may be used to alter the altitude and direction of the helicopter, whilst in map mode the joystick controls the scrolling of the map. It can be speeded up to scan reference blocks, block by block by using direction and fire button together. In map mode all the other instruments function and can be seen.

The message screen flashes when there is a communication for you. This may be along the lines of a request for transport, reinforcements or air cover. This screen can also be used to discover the locations of the other bases.

The landscape view is in 3D using white contour lines on a green ground to create the effect. Trees and houses are also clearly seen in white as well as enemy vehicles (in black) and base markers. In effect *Combat Lynx* uses a four-camera position display, so on making a right angled turn the screen blacks out momentarily to be replaced by the new view angle. The helicopter can fly both forwards and backwards at speed and may be landed on flat ground with care.

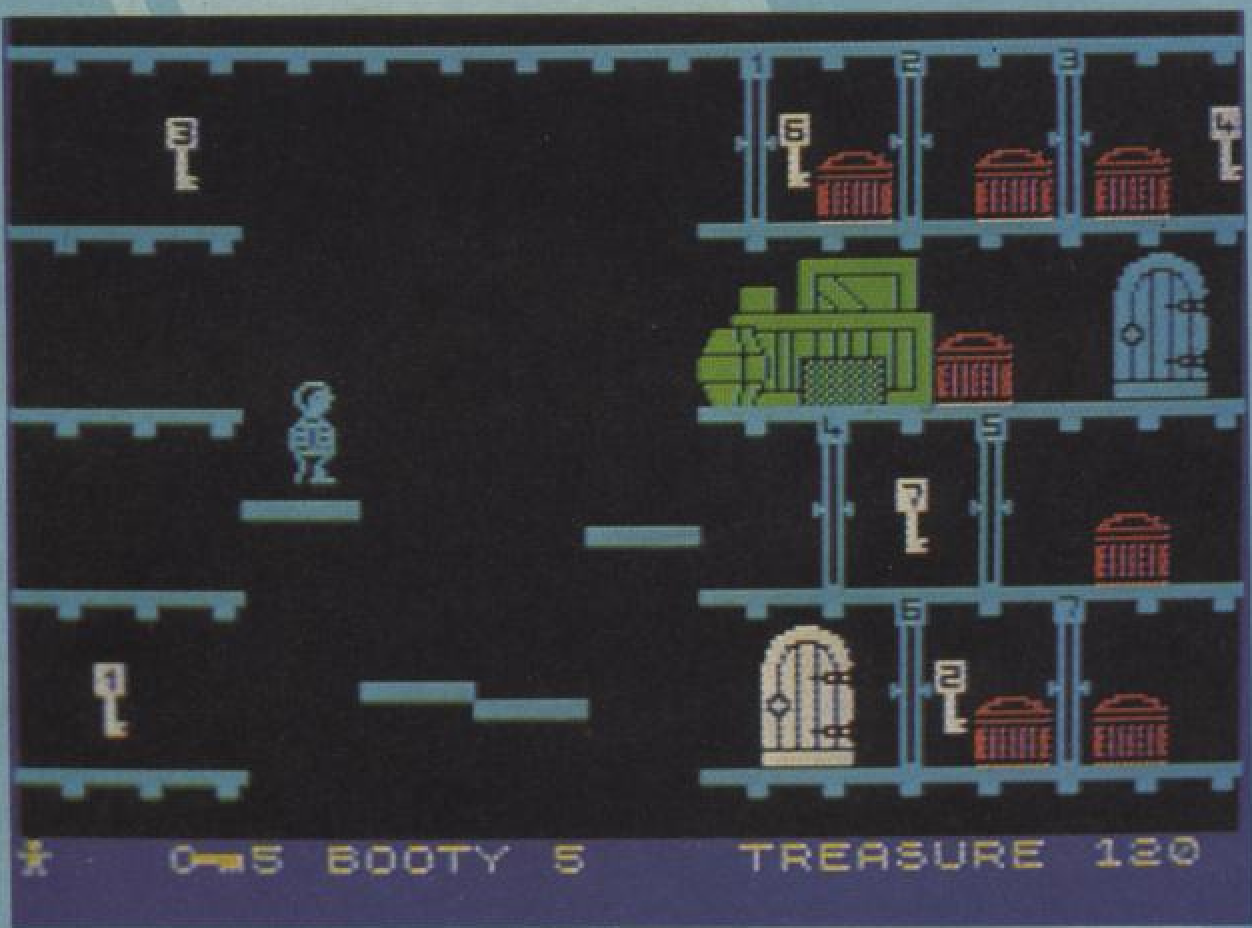
Weapons are fired first by selecting the weapon system you wish to fire. Guided weapons may simply be fired; aimed weapons must be fired after selecting cursor control, whereupon a black cross sight will appear to show where the weapon is aimed. Only one weapon system at a time may be used without reselection.

The skill levels reflect the number of bases you have to support, the number of enemy vehicles and flying craft up against you and the accuracy of their missiles.

CRITICISM

● 'I wondered when 3D graphics would be created with contour lines as on a map, and this seems to be the first action game to have done this to great effect. I feel that this type of 3D is more effective than an 'illusion' of 3D (i.e. things getting bigger or smaller). But it uses hidden objects like houses or enemies which cannot be seen when they're behind a hill. Such objects, however, do grow or shrink in size as you approach and fly over them, using perspective properly. The 3D effect is not just randomly generated as you play through a game because the entire playing area is mapped and the contour (3D effect) references work from it. But for each game, a new landscape is created (very quickly too). The game itself is very difficult to play due to the speed of the enemy, although realistic, and due to the fact that you generally fly at full speed. This probably does mean that it has a great potential for a long term game. A nice point for begin-

B·O·O·T·Y



Sixteen men on a dead man's chest...

BOOTY

Producer: **Firebird**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£2.50**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **John F. Cain**

From its excellent, animated title screen, you can see at once that this is a salty sea-dog of a game in which you play Jim (me lad) the cabin boy on a hazardous quest to collect all the booty strewn around the decks of an old galleon.

This is the first game from a very new company, but hardly an unknown one, for Firebird is the trade name for British Telecom (Firebird being the evil alter ego of that much loved feathered fellow Busby).

There are 20 holds in the ship (screens) with eight rooms making up each hold. All the doors are numbered and require the appropriately numbered key to be collected before going through the door. These keys are dotted about in different rooms, so it requires some nifty thinking to work your way round. Additionally there are doors which lead out of the screen here and there into other screens.

Each screen is arranged as a platform game (there's a logic here – each level being a deck of the galleon of course) with the platforms being connected either by ladders or by lifts. Some deck floors on certain screens tend to vanish now and again, and on some the combinations of lifts are very complicated. Cabin Boy Jim's life is not made any easier by the prowling activities of the ghost pirates, who march up and down within a room, cutlasses drawn. There's also the occasional rat and the Captain's berserk parrot that signal instant death. Collecting booty is done simply by touching it, but beware – some items are booby trapped and explode a second after contact, so Jim must get out of the way fast!

CRITICISM

● 'I'm always wary of cheap games but interested, with this one being British Telecom's first (arcade) game. To say the least, I was astounded by the superb, very solid graphics. The idea of a ship's interior is quite a novel one. Collecting booty at first seemed quite trivial but this is made considerably more difficult by needing the right key to open the correct room to be able to even get at the treasure. On some

C·O·M·B·A·T L·Y·N·X



ners is that it is fun just to fly about and take pot-shots at things, although I didn't hit very many enemy craft! Overall, well worth its money just for sheer content.'

● 'Combat Lynx *is both simulation and shoot em up games in one. The 3D effect created by using contour line graphics tends to give it a more technical feel, so more like a simulation, but on the other hand there are lots of jets and enemy helicopters whizzing around and ground forces shooting at you which gives the game its instant playability appeal. Once you get the hand of coping with everything, it's possible to play a game of high strategy which involves not only arcade skills but those of forward planning. For people who enjoy strategical type games,* Combat Lynx *should provide hours and hours of fun, while for those who prefer something instant and fast – choose skill level 4 and hang onto your hats! Generally the graphics are most impressive, with a few attribute problems when objects are about to become hidden, but these are minor in what is otherwise an engaging and challenging game.*

● 'The graphics in *Combat Lynx* are very good for a 3D simulation except it's a pity that you can't follow the landscape around when you turn through 90 degrees. This is very playable, but very hard to play and will give hours of enjoyment if you're willing to persevere with it. I think this is probably the best simulation I've seen to date. My only comment really, is that I think I would have liked it even more if you hadn't got the graphic of a helicopter in front of you, but instead saw the view as though you were in the cockpit. Overall, this is an excellent simulation.'

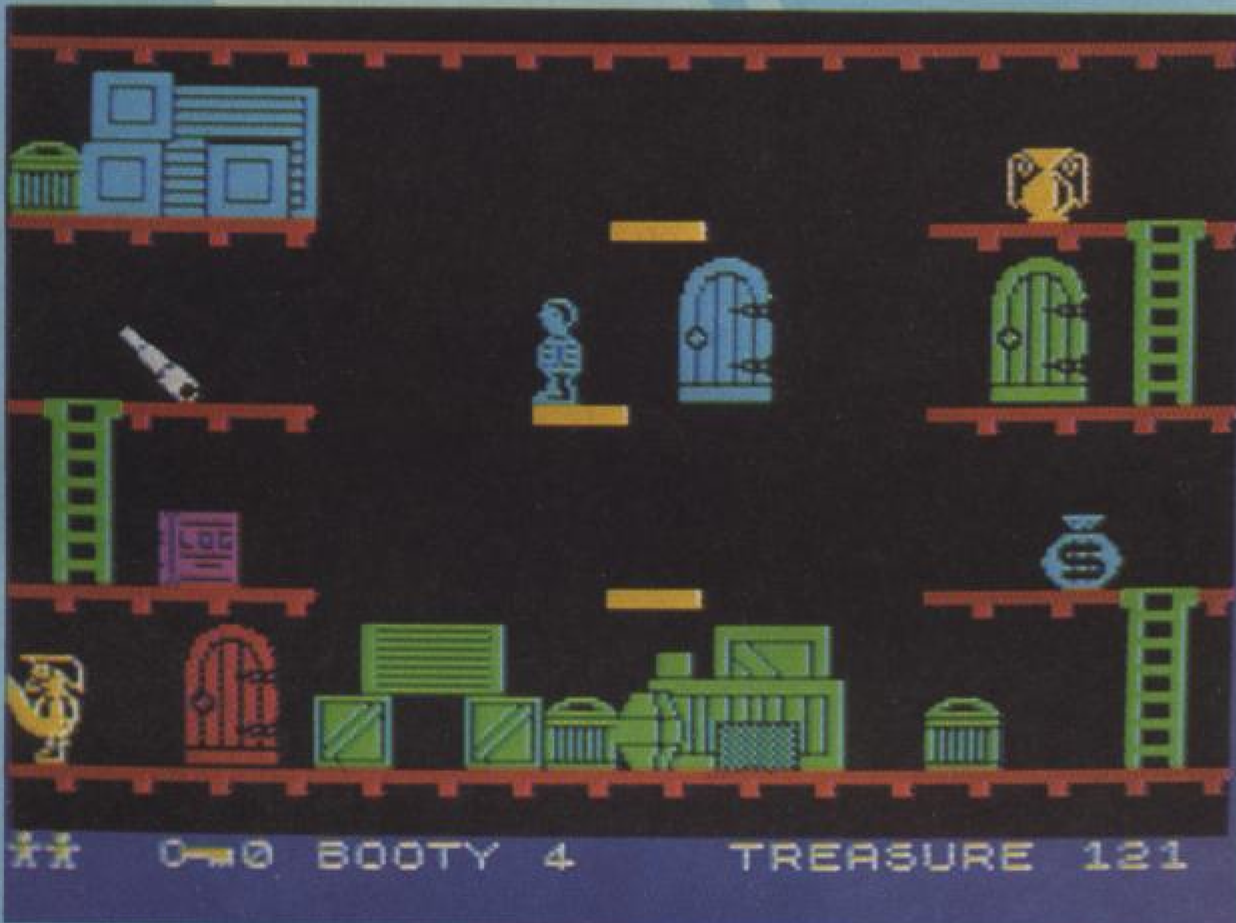
COMMENTS

Control keys: Cursors, but additionally there are a large amount of multi-use keys for control.
Joystick: cursor
Keyboard play: very responsive, and the other keys needed are kept to a minimum during flight or fight
Use of colour: very good, although kept simple onmaps and view, just a few small attribute problems
Graphics: excellent and highlynovel 3D
Sound: not very much for speed of graphics
Skill levels: 4
Lives: 3
General rating: excellent, challenging on a wide range of play options and represents excellent value for money.

Use of computer	80%
Graphics	88%
Playability	90%
Getting started	91%
Addictive qualities	89%
Value for money	91%
Overall	**88%**

B·O·O·T·Y

screens you need to wander all over the screen to get at the doors, and this can take ages to say the least. Each screen is inter-connected very nicely, each one needing a different type of skill. I especially like the way the lifts on some screens have been used, for example in one case there are five lifts all spaced next to each other, travelling in different directions at different speeds, which requires good timing skills to hop across to get a key, only to make you recross the lifts again several times – an excellent idea. Sound is continuous – a well known sea shanty tune, but if it drives you mad you can turn it off – I found I was able to pace myself by it. I'm amazed that Firebird are selling a well programmed game like this for a measly £2.50, when it could quite easily have sold for £5.95. This makes it tremendous value for money, and destroys the fallacy that cheapies are always nasties.'



... yo ho ho and a bottle of rum.

● *'The first impression of Booty is its lovely title page, second is a rather flat looking platform game, although the graphics are lively, animated and well designed. On beginning to play the game, this impression of okay-ness doesn't fade, as it's reasonable fun, just a matter of getting the right key to the right door and collecting the treasures. A few minutes later and this secondary impression is beginning to evaporate rapidly as the rich complexities of the game sink in. Not so simple after all, then. Not damned likely! All the screens are inter-linked and you cannot really just clear one and move to another – well you can sometimes, but the ghosts often make this impossible. Some of the screens which incorporate lifts, horizontal moving platforms, collapsing floors and lift stop floors which vanish after a second or two, start to give you the nightmare feeling that you may have been here before – is this galleon the true insides of the Yacht moored at the end of Jet Set Willy's Mansion? The content of the game reveals itself coyly minute after minute, with lively and ever-changing graphics. In fact* Booty *is marvellous entertainment, a challenging game and very addictive. It's also at a budget price. Incredible value. Get it!'*

● 'The graphics in *Booty* are colourful, well detailed, well animated, smooth and look real – a feature which many games don't boast these days. The pirates look real mean with



J·A·S·P·E·R

JASPER

Producer: **Micromega**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£6.95**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Derek Brewster**

Micromega have two games in this issue, and both are by the same author. *Kentilla* is a text/graphics adventure in the classic vein, but with *Jasper* Derek Brewster has changed tack completely (although it could well be called an arcade/adventure game) and taken himself and Micromega far away from the universe of 3D. *Jasper* is an all swinging, all singing, all dancing jump, hop and collect game in the tradition of *Jet Set Willy*. However collecting here isn't a question of collecting for points but because the various objects have a strictly defined purpose and use, which is what adds the adventure element.

Jasper is a mouse and the basic object of the game is to guide him from the start screen to the finishing screen without getting finished off en route. There are 22 screens to negotiate, all linked in the sense that you can move from one to the next and back again (or in one case down and up again). This is rather important because Jasper can only carry five objects at a time which means often having to drop something and then return for it. Consequently the 22 screens become more in terms of completing the game. The items collected (by standing on them and pressing the collect key) appear in small boxes at the top of the playing area and they may be used by pressing the appropriate numerical key. Each object does have a specific use – ropes are pretty obvious, but umbrellas? Well think carefully – this is a cartoon comic strip – press the button when forced to leap off a high place and bingo – the brolly opens to lower Jasper to the ground safely. Once used, an object vanishes.

Up against Jasper are a series of problems which include traditional platform strategical thinking, various animated animals like big cats, bunnies, wasps, spiders, snakes and scorpions, flowers which may be helpful or lethal and natives that throw coconuts and spears. Each screen has its own identity and share of the horrors. Fortunately Jasper has a mighty leap and can walk on two feet or duck down to all fours. Indeed, Jasper is a Mighty Mouse.



Jasper's a real swinger when it comes to big cats

CRITICISM

● 'What first struck me with this game is the sharpness and clarity of the numerous graphics, also their realism. A lot of hard work must have gone into creating the graphics. So much moves with this game, and everything that moves is so well animated. Many skills are required with *Jasper*, timing being one of the major ones, but this is also definitely a true arcade adventure (many others have claimed to be) because you need to find the objects to help you move onto the next screen; these objects are practical in the sense that you can and must use them, they're not just there for points. No detail whatever has been

B·O·O·T·Y

their cutlasses and beards as they bouncily walk along the ship's decks. I think this game will appeal to people who enjoy exploring type arcade games such as *Jet Set Willy*. There is the thrill of going through a door to see what comes next – often it's a meanly positioned pirate and you're only a step away from death – can you get to the button in time? The various screens have all been well designed to offer a different set of tactical problems – and it's nice to note that each one is remembered by the program, i.e. if you leave a screen and then re-enter it later, the pirates will be in exactly the position they were when you left it before. There's no doubt about it, *Booty* is a highly playable and addictive game, loads of fun and well worth its asking price.

COMMENTS

Control keys: user-definable, four direction and a fire (going through back doors) needed
Joystick: almost any via UDK
Keyboard play: suit yourself for positions, very responsive and capable of finely tuned movement
Use of colour: excellent, varied
Graphics: nice and solid, generally very good
Sound: continuous tune with on/off facility, plus some effects
Skill levels: 1
Lives: 3
General rating: the first budget game to get an unreserved appreciation from CRASH reviewers, playable, addictive and excellent value for money.

Use of computer	92%
Graphics	90%
Playability	94%
Getting started	89%
Addictive qualities	95%
Value for money	99%
Overall	**93%**



If you go down to the woods today you're sure of a big surprise



spared on this game on either the graphical or content side. *Jasper* is just such a pleasing game to play, seems to me to be perfect, and will need to be played a great deal to overcome the difficulty factor built in. It is, in my opinion, a distinct advance on the *Jet Set WIlly* type of game. Worth every penny and I really recommend it.'

● *Jasper has the makings of a hit game – tremendous graphics, well calculated problems to overcome and a marvellous hero in Jasper himself. There are quite a few keys used to control the game, so familiarity with the layout is important, since some decisions have to be made in a great hurry. Fortunately one key can do several things like Y to P will make Jasper climb up a rope, release it if he's swinging or just simply jump if he's on the ground or a platform. This is not an easy game, each screen is likely to kill you off at a moment's notice, but should you get through it safely there is a real time clock displayed, and the long term objectives are obviously to improve not only the score but also the time taken overall. On the subject of timing, there is also a time limit in which to get off a screen, which makes things even meaner. Very much a game of timing skill, Jasper is marvellous, and infuriatingly addictive.'*

● 'This is a sort of *Jungle Trouble*-plus game – very plus, because the graphics are excellent. There are so many different creatures, all of them beautifully animated and detailed, and all of them lethal! It has been constructed so that things seem impossible, when they aren't – good timing and a good memory are essential. But the adventure elements such as collecting useful objects and then finding out what to do with them (some have obvious uses, others less so) adds immensely to the playability of *Jasper*. Your mouse is also very versatile – pity the fingers aren't always as good! Micromega have fooled everybody with this game because it isn't 3D at all, and it just goes to show that a well thought out idea, well implemented doesn't need 3D to make it addictive or fun to play. *Jasper* will take a long time to get through. Great game.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: A/S left/right, Y to P up (rope), jump and release rope (when swinging), H to ENTER down (rope), and duck, B to SPACE = get an object, 1 to 5 = use carried object by box number, Q to T plus 1 to 5 = drop carried object.
Joystick: none – too many keys
Keyboard play: highly responsive, with two directional keys next to each other, leaves other hand free for key selection, but a programmable joystick might be an advantage here
Use of colour: excellent, very varied and bright
Graphics: excellent, marvellous animation and detail, fast and smooth and without any flicker
Sound: continuous tune and spot effects
Skill levels: 1
Lives: 3
Screens: 22
General rating: addictive, highly playable and highly recommended.

Use of computer	86%
Graphics	96%
Playability	91%
Getting started	90%
Addictive qualities	94%
Value for money	89%
Overall	**91%**





You can both play and read the adventure!

Scott Adams, is the most acclaimed adventure games writer in the world with an impressive string of internationally best-selling software titles behind him.

Now, in association with Marvel Comics he invites you to share the adventures of two of the world's best known super heroes.

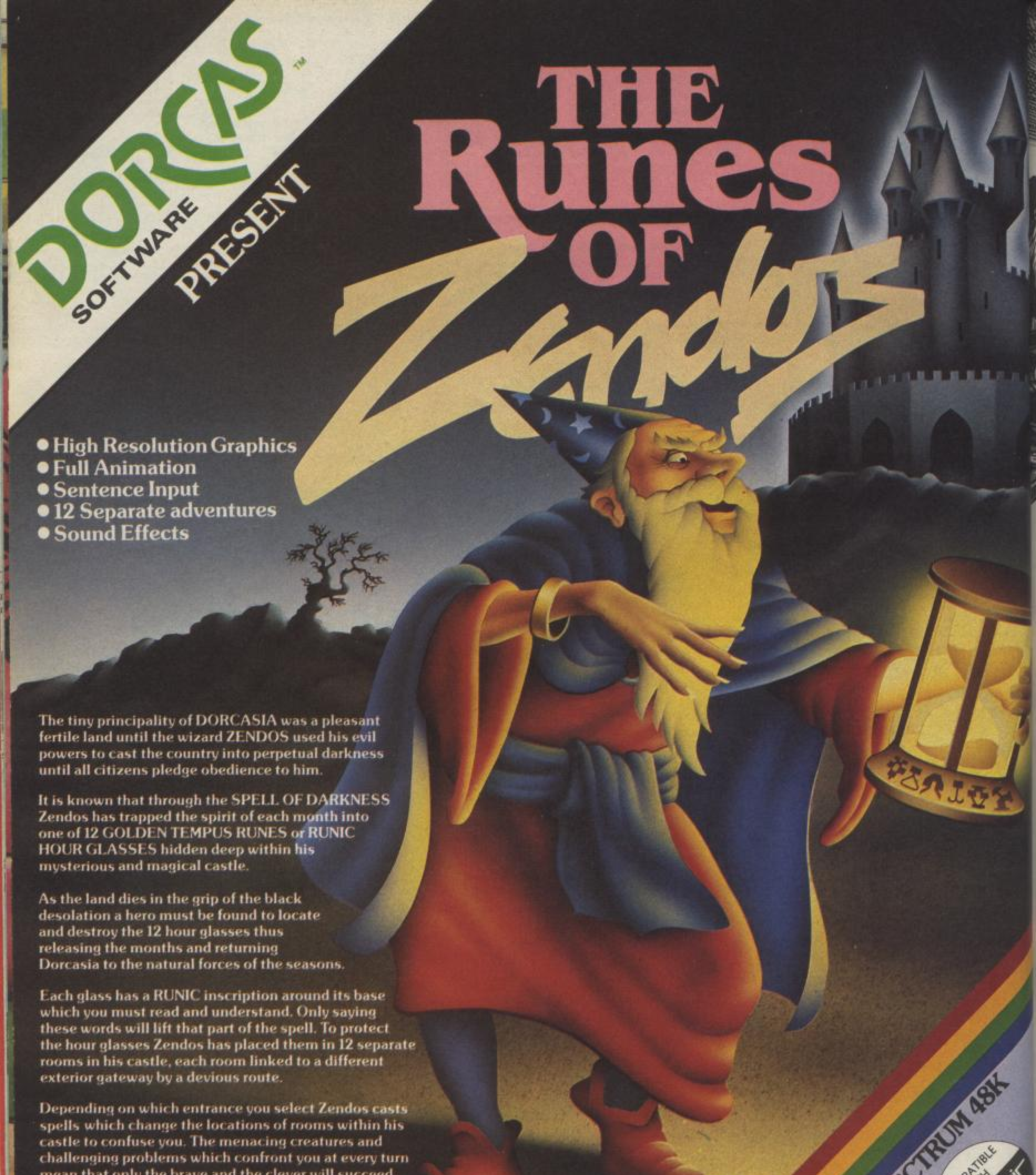
Adventure International Software challenge you to pit your mind against that of Scott Adams with THE HULK™ and SPIDERMAN.™ Both games are for most popular home computers and incorporate text with spectacular high resolution graphics, allowing you to immerse yourself in both a visually as well as mentally exciting adventure.

Now's the time to walk into a shop, and walk out with an adventure.



ADAMS
ESSUPERHERO
Graunaid
Scott A
HULK
WAKELIN '84
TM





THE Runes OF Zendos

- High Resolution Graphics
- Full Animation
- Sentence Input
- 12 Separate adventures
- Sound Effects

The tiny principality of DORCASIA was a pleasant fertile land until the wizard ZENDOS used his evil powers to cast the country into perpetual darkness until all citizens pledge obedience to him.

It is known that through the SPELL OF DARKNESS Zendos has trapped the spirit of each month into one of 12 GOLDEN TEMPUS RUNES or RUNIC HOUR GLASSES hidden deep within his mysterious and magical castle.

As the land dies in the grip of the black desolation a hero must be found to locate and destroy the 12 hour glasses thus releasing the months and returning Dorcasia to the natural forces of the seasons.

Each glass has a RUNIC inscription around its base which you must read and understand. Only saying these words will lift that part of the spell. To protect the hour glasses Zendos has placed them in 12 separate rooms in his castle, each room linked to a different exterior gateway by a devious route.

Depending on which entrance you select Zendos casts spells which change the locations of rooms within his castle to confuse you. The menacing creatures and challenging problems which confront you at every turn mean that only the brave and the clever will succeed.



THE ORACLE'S CAVE

Our best seller available for the 48K SPECTRUM and COMMODORE 64.

Oracle's Cave is a unique adventure game featuring continuously displayed high resolution graphics and text, a new cave layout and event sequence for every game and a time limit on every adventure.

Available on cassette from leading retailers or direct from:

DORCAS SOFTWARE

3 The Oasis, Glenfield, Leicester LE3 8QS
at £7.95 (inc. VAT)
Postage and Packing FREE



DEREK BREWSTER'S

Adventure Trail

BACK TO BASICS

There has been for some time a body of opinion which puts forward the view that machine code is superior to Basic, per se. Arcade games, where speed os the deciding factor, may well lend themselves to this argument but some strategy, and all adventure games can be better seved by some Basic routines. The reason for this apparent anomaly is clear to anyone who has taken the time and effort needed to master machine code. Although machine code is ideally more malleable in any given situation, coding in reality proves to be certainly slower and often less flexible, and crucially, the program is less easily altered.

After playing and reviewing many adventures this contradiction has made itself plain. The complexities of machine code lead to stilted adventures unless the author allows much development time. The economic vagaries of the games market alas, would make it far more worthwhile for such a successful author to produce two or even three arcade games in such a space of time with the certainty of a far higher income. *The Quill*, as is often plaudited on cassette inlays results in an all machine code program but the structure of each Quilled game is necessarily the same. What is less apparent is the use of similar devices by other software houses in order to reduce the development time of adventures. Herein lies the paradox. Even though machine code *should* be the more flexible, due to its time-consuming coding it is rarely so in effect and it would seem the case that it is the adventure which makes some use of Basic which shows the originality both in display, theme and plot.

So the next time you examine a cassette inlay don't fall into the trap of making judgements based upon the divisive argument – Basic vs. machine code. Where the documentation tells of an all machine-coded program this in itself gives no indication of the quality of the game as an adventure. Basic is devalued by its simplicity and it familiarity but adventure is a more sophisticted market than arcade since at a time when the Spectrum has been pushed to its limits, imagination, theme and plot are now the decisive factors.

VOTING FOR THE ADVENTURE CHART

The CRASH Adventure Chart has picked up considerably since we first introduced it, with more and more votes coming in every day! To make life easier for sorting, we are now providing a separate write-in form, so please use it for the Adventure Chart, and not the one included at the bottom of the Hotline details. If you are voting on both charts, you may send both forms together in the same envelope of course.

How to register your votes

There seems to have been some confusion in the minds of voters for the Adventure Chart, so to clarify the situations, here's how we do it. You may vote for **as many titles as you wish** (not just five as in the Hotline Chart) and you may award any of them points out of ten. So, for instance, you might vote for seven titles giving each of them ten points if you think they are worth it, or only three and give them one each. These votes are then added up for each title and the total is divided by the number of people who voted for the program resulting in an aggregate figure. From these figures, the top thirty adventure games are taken in descending order.

Phoned-in votes are accepted over the Hotline **(0584 3015)** in the same way (please state that you are voting for the Adventure Chart at the beginning), and may also be written in letter form without the use of the coupon if you prefer.

Adventure Chart Prize Draw

And don't forget that, like the Hotline Chart, you can win prizes! Each month we draw a winner from the voters, who receives £40 worth of software and a CRASH T-shirt, with four runners-up each getting a T-shirt and a mini-subscription to CRASH for three months.

ADVENTURE CHART COUPON

Remember – points out of ten for as many titles as you wish.

Name ....

Address ....

....

postcode

Send your coupon to: **CRASH ADVENTURE TRAIL, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB**

HAMPSTEAD

Producer: **Melbourne House**
Retail Price: **£9.95**
Authors: **T. Lever & P. Jones**

As you are now probably aware I do not live in Hampstead. You have searched every bistro and boutique but to no avail. Although Adventure Trail appeals to the AB group (top socio-economic assemblage in the epi-fauna) I have not succumbed to embarrassed recognition in high society but instead stand unaffected in the cool northern rain waiting for the occasional omnibus and knowing only too well that here it's all about where you bought your flat cap and how deep is the froth on your beer. For more ostentatious affectations one must move south.

You set off as a nobody somewhere in north-west London (i.e., nowhere) watching an undemanding, insubstantial, feeble-minded, spontaneously exciting, light entertainment show, 3-2-1! On the dole with no money and the corollary, no friends, you sit in your dingy council flat torn between viewing the non-stop entertainment on TV or following the clouds of smoke from your window as they belch toward you from the local power station. You can look forward to a life of lying, cheating, stealing and defrauding as you scheme your way to Hampstead but for now you must busy yourself with the task of finding that UB40 card. Should you, in real life, be Hampsteaded, or simply exist in nonplussed brain death in Surbiton, the booklet gives exact details concerning the card's use and the elaborate etiquette that surrounds it, such as, queue orderly and don't sleep throught the part where your name is called. The problem is you must attain Hampstead but think it unlikely you'll find many friends in Hampstead dole office. Indeed, subsequent research proves this line of reasoning correct. Denizens of Hampstead fill their time with occupations that have them cast as critics, playwrights, architects and designers, actors and academians, some of whom, like yourself at the start of this adventure, were nobodies living nowhere.

To go up in the world you try to gain the admiration and respect of your fellow man, and there's more to it than a fat bank balance. In Hampstead it helps to give the impression you know something of art and to be seen in the right places, with the right people and wearing the right clothes. Be careful not to be flamboyant – it's unseemly to be seen as a social climber in Hampstead so you had better settle there only when you have everything you need.

It helps to know something of London even if it's just the sites found on a monopoly board. You choose your route from the following: St. John's Wood, Richmond, West End, Covent Garden, Waterloo, The City, King's Cross and Cambridge. This isn't as easy as it looks as a pleasant suburb may provide such comfort that it becomes too onerous to leave and you join the ranks of the malcontents who never quite made it.

What about the game itself? Much effort (alas not enough) has been expended to conceal its use of *The Quill*, in the Spectrum version in any case, but the cursor and the distinctive R for Redescribe location are evidence enough to pinpoint the source of the program. Perhaps the changes go beyond the simply cosmetic, but surely if this were the case to any great extent all signatures of *The Quill* would have been vanquished. Quilled adventures haven't done well in the charts but this game may well prove an exception due to its uniquely funny storyline.

The adventure has opulent packaging with a sixteen page booklet and a very attractive casing. It sees itself as suitable for a wide range from beginner to experienced, taking several weeks to complete. The '100% machine code' reflects its Quilled origins. The loading screen depicts the home of Hampstead Man which is over two hundred years old, deep within leafy suburbia surrounded by rows of neatly-clipped hedges. On the colourful sofa lounge a pair of matching Afghan hounds.

As you set off on your quest you would be wise to remember what you've read in the Hampstead Booklet which gives you precise details on just how you might achieve that coveted diploma in social climbing. The help offered includes question and answer sessions. One goes like this. Q: Why do dustbins have no lids in Hampstead? A: In order that passers-by may see the week's completed *Guardin* crosswords stacked neatly within. The booklet is very entertaining and amusing, if not enlightening for those who know little of London society, but reaches the heart of the matter on page 10; Hampstead – what's the point: 'Everybody wants to feel superior. This feeling takes two forms. Those without money must be content to feel morally superior. Those without morals can financially superior. But only in Hampstead is it possible to attain superiority in both. 'So now you know. It's well worth making a thorough search of the house before you leave; the lack of one item in particular will see your sudden exit from the game. You meet this sudden social death with grudging acceptance struck by the reality that you had underestimated just how peculiar social climbing can be. Careful analysis of your every movement will have you in Hampstead before you can say 'colour supplement' but any disparity will be ruthlessly exposed.

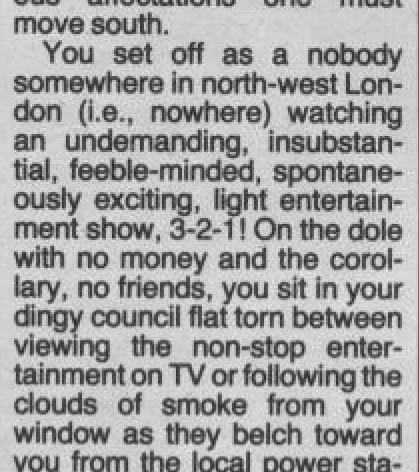
Hampstead is the most original adventure theme to appear this year and is accompanied by the wittiest book I've read in quite a while. Spectrum owners might like to note that on this occasion the Commodore 64 has acquired the better deal as its version features graphics. Despite this the Spectrum *Hampstead* has powerful EXAMINE and SEARCH commands which make the early stages very easy helping the occasional adventurer into what is a very amusing and enjoyable game.

Difficulty: Reasonably easy
Graphics: None
Presentation: Good
Response: Very fast
Input Facility: Limited verb/noun
General Rating: Brilliantly original and very entertaining

Atmosphere	8
Vocabulary	8
Logic	7
Debugging	10
Overall Value	7



Dogs for Nobs in the HAMPSTEAD twin-set and pearls game from Melbourne House.



ADVENTURE TRAIL REVIEW RATINGS

ATMOSPHERE: reflects quality of location description and graphics and how credibly characters behave.

VOCABULARY: the completeness of the vocabulary and friendliness of response. All words and associated words (objects etc) in location descriptions should be included.

LOGIC: reflects the logic of the problems encountered and whether or not you are likely to be killed without warning or chance of escape.

DEBUGGING: indicates the level of crashproofing. A program should not be crashed simply by making an incorrect entry or by pressing an unfortunate combination of keys.

OVERALL: general rating based on price and the other ratings BUT NOT AN AVERAGE OF THE OTHER RATINGS.

You really can't go wrong with any Level 9 game as they are really brilliant

CRASH MICRO SEPT '84.

"Whichever machine you own, if you have the vaguest tendency towards adventure playing then you must try one of these games (unfortunately you'll probably end up wanting to buy the lot!)."
Computing Today, August 84

"To me, all Level 9 adventures create a remarkable atmosphere because the descriptions sound so life-like. This is where so many other adventures fail."
Crash, July 84

"But it's not just the size of the game it's the quality as well that is astonishing ... ... scenes to fire the imagination."
PCG, April 84

"As in all Level 9's adventures, the real pleasure comes not from scoring points but in exploring the world in which the game is set and learning about its denizens."
Which Micro?, February 84

"(LORDS OF TIME). As we have come to expect from Level 9, the program is executed with wonderful style . . . Highly recommended."
PCW, 1 February 84

"I thoroghly recommend these Adventures, they are excellent value for money. No self-respecting Adventure-addict should be without them. I believe Level 9 are producing a series of Adventures which should be regarded as classics."
Atari User, July 84

"These programs run very fast and there are no frustrating pauses. Level 9 Adventures are superbly designed and programmed, the contents first rate. The implementation of Colossal Adventure is nothing short of brilliance; rush out and buy it. While you're at it, buy their others too. Simply smashing!"
Your 64, June 84

"Level 9 — arguably the producer of the best adventure games in the UK — has done it again. LORDS OF TIME is a sparkling addition to its stable of winners."
Acorn User, July 84

"(SNOWBALL). This is another imaginative, massive-scaled immensely enjoyable adventure from those experts down at Level 9 Computing."
Your Computer, March 84



Level 9's epic adventures are now here for the AMSTRAD. Disk versions are available for the BBC (40/80 track) and Commodore 64. And, best of all, RETURN TO EDEN is ready. It's been a busy month!

NEW

RETURN TO EDEN is the long-awaited sequel to Level 9's top-selling Snowball adventure. Now it's here with 220 locations, masses of puzzles, and with pictures on the CBM and Spectrum versions.

	Cassette £9.95	Disk £11.95
1. **COLOSSAL ADVENTURE.** The classic mainframe game with 70 bonus rooms.	☐	☐
2. **ADVENTURE QUEST.** An epic journey through Middle Earth.	☐	☐
3. **DUNGEON ADVENTURE.** A massive game which completes the Middle Earth Triology.	☐	☐
4. **SNOWBALL.** Save the interstar freezer, Snowball 9, in a huge space adventure with over 7000 locations.	☐	☐
5. **RETURN TO EDEN.** SF adventure on the weirdest planet ever. The sequel to Snowball, though you don't need to have played this.	☐	☐
7. **LORDS OF TIME.** A humorous romp through World History.	☐	☐

I ENCLOSE A CHEQUE/PO FOR £9.95 EACH (CASSETTE) OR £11.95 EACH (DISK) FOR BBC OR CBM 64

My name: . . . .

My address: . . . .

. . . .

. . . .

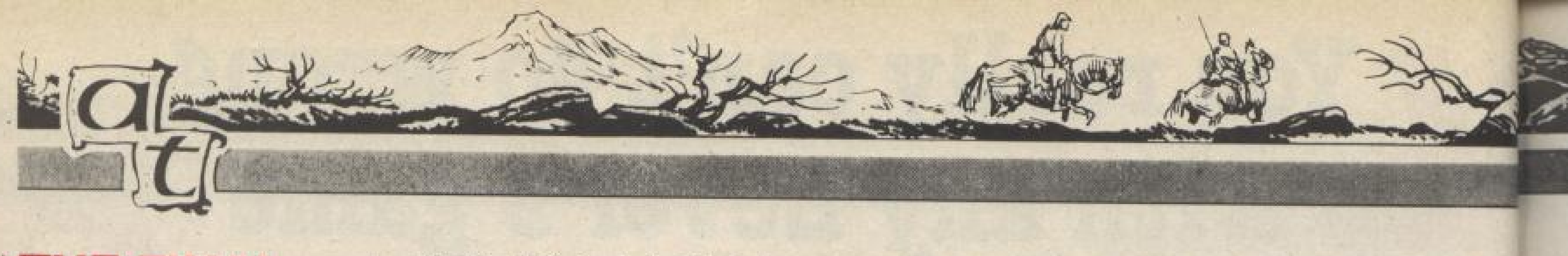
My micro is a: . . . .

(one of those listed below, with at least 32K of memory).

Contact:
LEVEL 9 COMPUTING
Dept.**CM**, 229, Hughenden Road, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP13 5PG.

Available from W H Smith and good computer shops everywhere. If your local dealer doesn't stock Level 9 adventures yet, get him to contact us or: Centresoft, Microdealer UK, Ferranti & Craig, Leisuresoft, Lime Tree, LVL, PCS, R & R or Wonderbridge.

AMSTRAD BBC CBM64 SPECTRUM MTX ORIC 1 LYNX NASCOM ATARI



THE FINAL MISSION

Producer: **Incentive**
Retail price: **£5.50**
Author: **R.A. McCormack**

Vicious attacks have come from beyond a range of mountains to the east – the Mountains of Ket. The Priest King Vran Verusbel, leader of the cult of mad monks, and thier High Priestess Delphia, the most beautiful woman in existence, are set against you. They find shelter in the evil Temple of Vran where you make you way accompanied by the magic assassin bug Edgar whose poisoned fangs will sink into your neck should you decide to shirk your mission. You must be under close scrutiny as you play a rehabilitated criminal-type who chose this scheme as a device to escape almost certain death. When you confront the likes of the green slime you will wonder at the wisdom of your decision.

The Final Mission is the third part in what has now become the famous *Ket Trilogy*. It follows *The Mountains of Ket* and *The Temple of Vran* which, if successfully completed, give the aspirant the chance of a prize. The adventures are classic text-only games with large numbers of locations with many problems to solve. There are a good number of useful objects which when first sighted, and later viewed in the inventory, are accompanied by a small token graphic. Input is confined to verb/noun liaving the program to concentrate on giving a greater, more intelligent feedback to whatever input you might devise. These and other refinements, including an endearing plot and consistent theme, have won many converts to the *Trilogy* adventures.



In part three of the *Ket Trilogy* you meet the evil Verusbel himself in his inner sanctum located beyond the five enigmatic Gate Guardians. Should you defeat him and remove the threat to the Lords of Ket, you must still secure your own escape.

Loading *The Final Mission* is very quick as it takes place at twice the normal Spectrum speed. It loads in an unusual sequence which makes it impossible to BREAK and very difficult to copy.

You wake. . . stunned. . .

Gradually your memory clears. You recall a blow to the head as you descended some stairs enshrouded in gloom. "We are in a dark and dank cell. There is no light save for a low glow coming from our east. Near us is: a wooden chair." So starts *The Final Mission* with yourself, Edgar, a magic ring and. . . a wooden chair. I wouldn't be giving anything away if I said that you just might need that chair and so, with the help of the cassette inlay notes, the first problem unravels easily enough. The second problem is another matter – it's pedantic and you don't so much solve it as stumble omthe solution by doing as many daft and not-so-daft things as they come into your head. I'll have to come straight out with it. The early part of the adventure lacks something in that you keep thinking of how you would have devised a stronger plot, say using the glass from the window to focus the rays of light onto the straw. Or anything whereby you might use you imagination and reasoning skills. Instead the plot transpires to be dull and the solutions to the problems arbitrary. You get the feeling that the second problem is no more than artifice to slow your progress.

The descriptions of the seemingly endless corridors and passageways with doors marking the end of one and the beginning of another leaves you with few locations which, on reflection, make any impression. Often it's difficult to know how to label a location on your map when you're simply standing outside a secret passageway. While I'm griping, the input routine is just a touch slow although a pleasant beep with every key depression helps alleviate some of the annoyance. Switching off the beep with the BEEP command does not appreciably speed it up.

Now that's off my chest I can get down to what's worthy about the game.

There's a polish and panache about the project which singles it out as one where some thought has gone into its construction. Right from the first screen, or the very attractive cover and loading screen before that, the game makes its presence felt. Above the neatly boxed location description ornate markings accommodate the score in the top right corner which increments on each new location. As you enter the new locality a distinctive tune sounds directing your attention back to your map where you now add another label. Simple ideas which add up to your enjoyment of the game.

The vocabulary is quite friendly, but where it is exceptional is in its responsiveness to your input. By monitoring the continual string of mostly useful comments your efforts are guided to more fruitful endeavours. You can EXAMINE almost anything and effect a response.

As with the previous episodes of the saga interest is enriched with the combat routine where your prowess or swordsmanship, energy or physical condition, and luck, descending from their starting values of eight, are pitted against those of your aggressor. In the case of the En Monster, which has prowess and energy of 10, you would be wise to disengage and forgo any shallow victory you might extract.

The Final Mission, by reason of its position as the last tale in the *Ket Trilogy*, is sure to prove popular. It maintains the same high standards of the previous two episodes and also features one or two improvements. However, the overall impression is of a game not so much crafted as produced to a deadline.

Difficulty: Average
Graphics: None
Presentation: Good
Input Facility: Verb/Noun
Response: A touch slow but gives intelligent replies to most input
Special Features: On screen scoring and combat routine
General Rating: Good

Atmosphere	7
Vocabulary	7
Logic	6
Debugging	9
Overall Value	7

GROUND ZERO

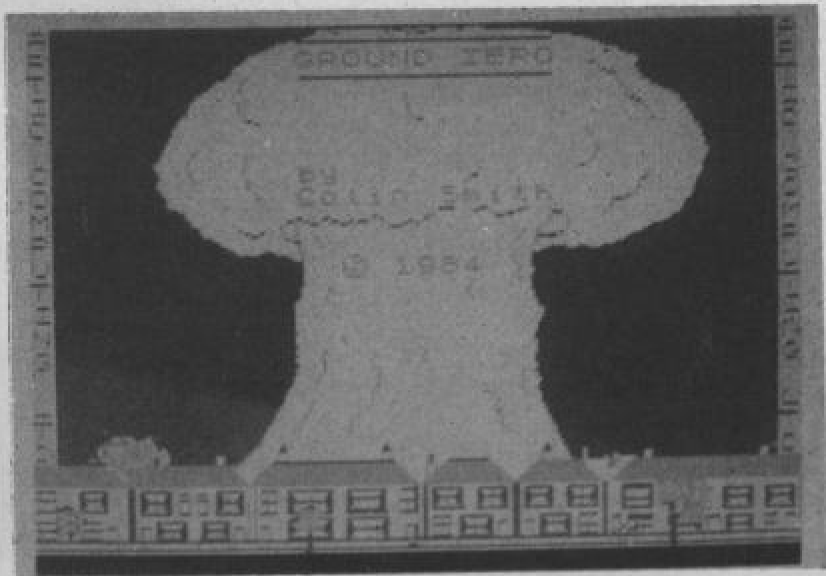
Producer: Artic Computing
Retail Price: **£6.95**
Author: **Colin Smith**

Artic Computing is a company that made its name with its very popular yet difficult range of adventures. This adventure differs from the A-F series inits friendliness and extensive use of examine, and in its making use of *The Quill*.

The adventure is based upon the events leading up to a nuclear attack on Britain. International tension is atits greatest for many years and conventional armed conflict may well spill over into a full scale nuclear confrontation. law and order is breaking down and those who are to survive face a tough battle in the remaining few moments of confusion and chaos. To set the scene the program reminds you this is an adventure which one day we may well all have to face for real.

Nuclear war is a harrowing thought and to strike home the idea the game has a suitably nausiating loading screen with a large flashing detonation plume. Stare at this screen too long and you could become a psychotic civil defence volunteer.

You find yourself in the lounge of a typical suburban semi with floral wallpaper, foam-cushioned three piece, ornaments and a television, which, if it is your wish to turn it on, provides a tricky first problem. The game professes to be verb/noun but I'll save you some time if I tell you that on this occasion the program treats television as the verb and the next word as a proposition. I don't mind being so heavy-handed with this clue because a good adventure should go far beyond simple word-matching. Once you have the television on it receives a news bulletin which gives you the clues to your survival. These loosely follow those given inthat suspect government handbook which has had us alllavishly furnishing our broom cupboards. There's ahumorous end to the message – 'There now follows a cartoon'. Sadly the picture fades before you can check to see whether it's vintage Tom & Jerry or not.



The 'nauseating' title screen from GROUND ZERO.

No sooner do you leave the entrance hall outside the lounge when the phone rings. Recent research suggests that the phone rings either when we're in the bath or when we are doing things like hurring around collecting items for a makeshift nuclear shelter before the bomb drops. More research suggests we need more phones around the house but another solution is not to have one at all and this turns out to be the case here. A mechanical voice says 'Normal telephone services have been discontinued. Please refer to public broadcasts for further informtaion.' Better start looking for a battery for that radio right away.

The first few frames of the game have you searching the house using examine extensively whereupon you soon obtain most of the items mentioned in the TV announcement. Other items you come across are believable, everyday items you might find around the home are refreshingly useful objects such as knives, banknotes and food rations. These objects are sensibly disposed about your abode with a knife in the kitchen and a mattress in the bedroom.

Moving around outside the house is more fraught with danger as a trip out on the bicycle will soon prove. It's chaotic outside with troops everywhere trying to impose some semblence of order and many directions you attempt end in displays or an early exit.

Ground Zero is a Quilled, text-only adventure with a harrowing theme. Like myself you may find the theme uninspiring as the thought of building a small, poky shelter in the home is probably the largest single factor to explain why most people would rather not survive a nuclear attack. However, survive you must in this game and once the task is taken up the story flows along if not merrily, then consistently enough to have you thinking on just how you might build a shelter were the worst to happen. The extensive use of examine, clear presentation and believable plot make this a fine adventure – if you can stomach the theme.

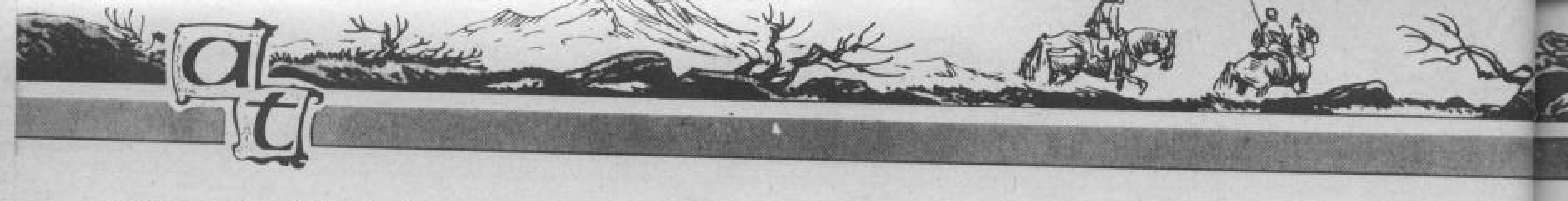
Difficulty: Average
Graphics: None
Presentation: Good
Input Facility: Verb/Noun
Response: Very fast
General Rating: Good

Atmosphere	8
Vocabulary	7
Logic	8
Debugging	10
Overall Value	7

FOREST AT WORLD'S END

Producer: **Interceptor Software**
Retail Price: **£5.50**
Authors: **D.M. & J.A. Banner**

Forest at World's End is released from the same stable as *Message from Andromeda*, and in almost every respect, resembles its predecessor. Changes have been made – the graphics are much improved but the plot is unimaginative; space adventures are relatively thin on the



ground but this fantasy follow-up too often lapses into cliche.

Princess Mara has been captured by the evil wizard Zarn. In a sneak attack on the palace his henchmen abducted her and led her to the wizard's stronghold deep within the forest at the world's end. Mara's father, the King no less, has called upon you, the mightest of ancient warriors, to go where none have returned alive. Your objective is to locate and rescue the princess and return her to the Great Valley.

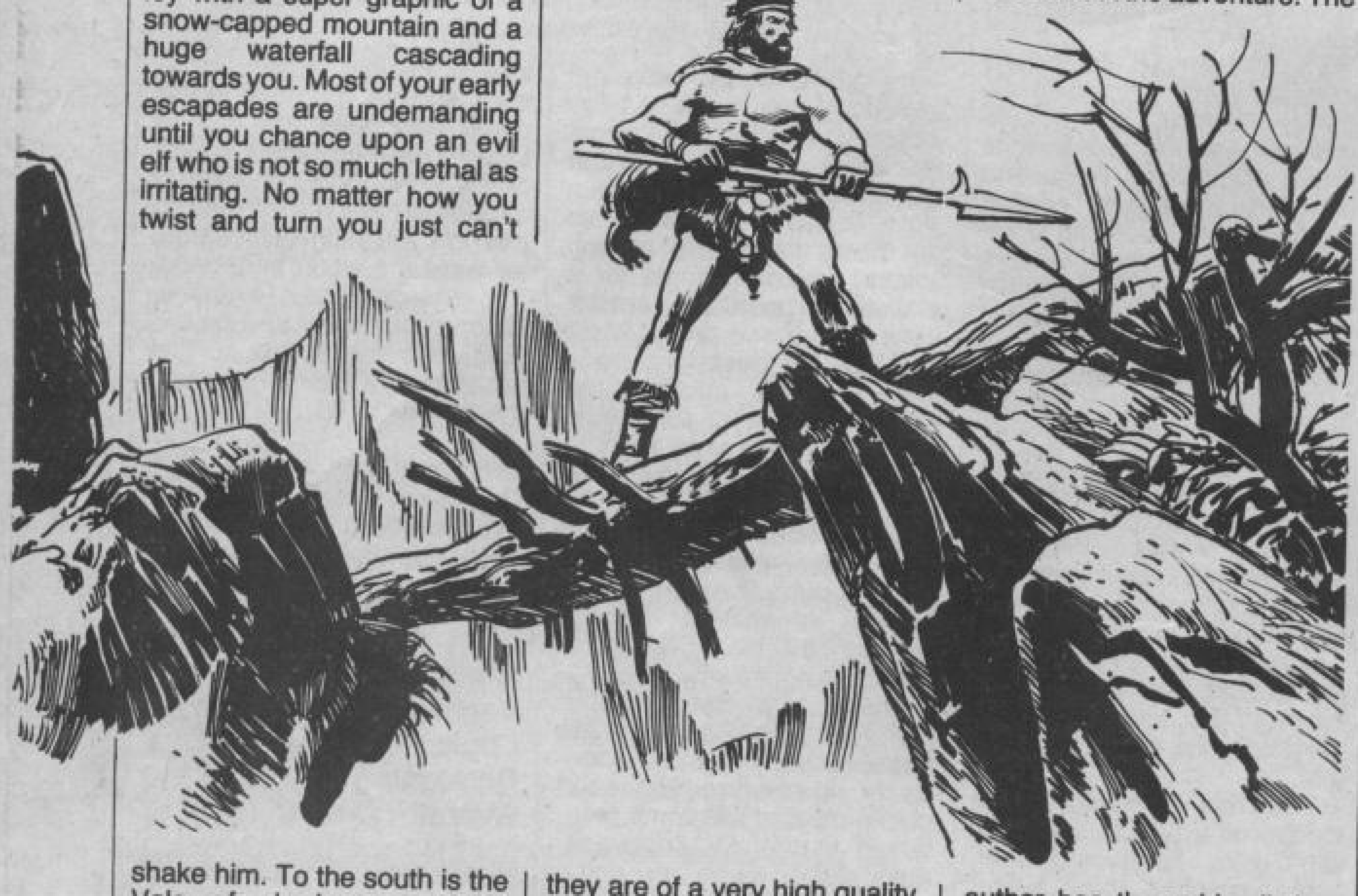
You set off in the Great Valley with a super graphic of a snow-capped mountain and a huge waterfall cascading towards you. Most of your early escapades are undemanding until you chance upon an evil elf who is not so much lethal as irritating. No matter how you twist and turn you just can't shake him. To the south is the Vale of shadows and the author waxes lyrical, 'The sun, shining through the trees, creates shifting patterns of light and darkness.' This is an eventful location where you see The Old Man, and get the bow and arrows to put an end to that elf. To kill the elf you will have to go about some word-matching the solution to which strikes me as illogical, but having played countless adventures, what's new? The strange thing is, on killing the elf you are told 'You fire an arrow' and yet FIRE ARROW AT ELF is not accepted for the program does not understand the word FIRE. Weird. Before ileave the elf; if you fool around too long he can end up getting the better of you. You'll find other assailants who are similarly prone to an almost unfailingly true arrow. Perhaps in this respect the game loses out to those which now feature a more complex and exciting combat scenario.

The unfriendly vocabulary seen when dealing with the elf may not be the rule as I discovered when I attempted to cross the chasm. Many combinations of words will see the log in place.

Forest at World's End has only about tengraphics or so throughout its whole length but each one is worth savouring as they are of a very high quality. They appear almost instantaneously and are colourfully depicted and highly detailed. The input routine has opted for neatness as opposed to efficiency; there is no cursor or beep. Having said this, I found input to be mostly error-free. In many areas the game becomes difficult to map. Go east and as often as not west will not take you back again. After travelling blind for a while you sometimes come out into an area where the directions become lucid again. The way the game scrolls will annoy many. For some unknown reason the top description scrolls up and off when you input at the bottom. This results in your having to continually use L for LOOK.

The game does not have many problems and those you do come acrossare unoriginal. If you have a key it opens the chest and a log naturally enough gets you across a chasm. When you are unsure what anobject might be useful for it will soon become apparent as all theother objects are tied up with problems leaving the only, one, possible use. Since of all the aspects of producing a follow-up adventure, plot is that which takes the most time, you can't help the felling that this effort has been churned out on the heels of the last.

Forest at World's End is a mainly text adventure with a few exceptional graphics scattered about the adventure. The author has the noble distinction of placing many fine graphics towards the end. Competent programming gives a rapid response time but the game is quite unique with the absense of SCORE. For an experienced explorer this adventure will pose few lasting problems and offers little that's new. Nevertheless, it is a well executed program, and for some, may provide a worthy distraction.



Difficulty: Easy
Graphics: Few but very good
Presentation: Good
Input Facility: Sentences
Response: Instant
General Rating: Rather short

Atmosphere:	6
Vocabulary	6
Logic	5
Debugging	10
Overall Value	6

CRUSOE

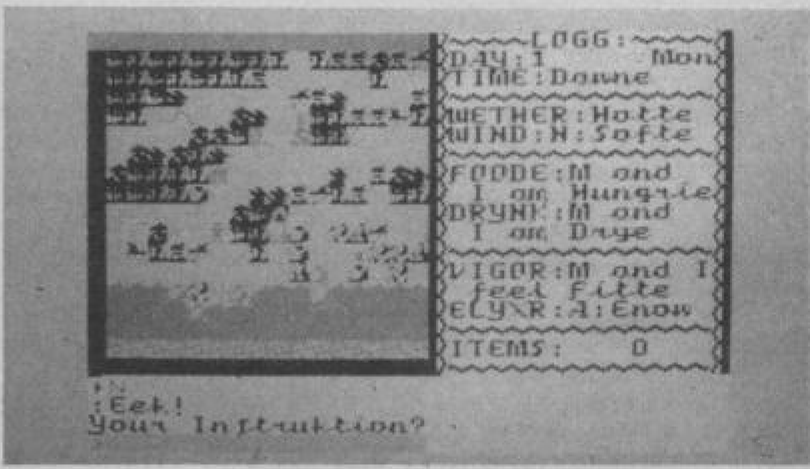
Producer: **Automata**
Retail price: **£6.00**
Author: **Jon Smith**

Automata made their name with an unusual adventure, *Pimania*, and with the first serial cartoon advertizements exhibiting their own unique good humour and lightheartedness – a refreshing interlude from the unremitting commercial onslaught emanating from other software houses. *Pimania* has achieved notoriety, and lately, newsworthiness over the extreme lengths many will take to recover the Golden SUndial of Pi from its depository deep within a long forgotten oceanic nuclear bunker. I've even known some to go so far as to play the adventure.

Crusoe is based upon the novel by Daniel Defoe and features free music on the flip side by Dan Defoe and the Castaways but turns out to be a desert island discs spoof with passable musical adverts for Automata products. The star of the show has a high pitched voice with an enchanting Scottish lilt. Crusoe is stranded on a remote island in Yorkshire (Hull?) in the year 1684, with nothing but an empty stomach, a bottle of granny's patent elixir and the shorts he stands up in. The aim is to return home and steer the litigation against your travel agent through court.

The game, following an attractive loading screen, is very colourful and is dominated by the playing area on the left which depicts the palms, islands, fruit trees, cacti, monsters and treasures that will help or hinder you in your quest. To the right is The Logg with Day, Time, Weather, Wind, Food & Drink, Vigour, Elixir and Items down one side opposite which is first, the letter which must not run too far up the alphabet for safety's sake, and then a comment like 'and I feel fitte'. This seventeenth century notation adds an authentic flavour to the proceedings and no doubt conceals any propensity towards misspelling. Prepare yourself for the culture shock by learning these few words – fitte, wether, foode, rekt, werie.

Along the bottom goes your input and the comment it elicits above. The casette cover amusingly keeps the tenuous links with the mainstream



It's Desert Island Discs for CRUSOE and Man Pi-day in ye olde Automata adventure.

adventure by calling I (for Inventory) 'What have I got?', SCORE 'Will I survive?' and D, Describe. You move around by pressing the N, S, E, and W keys, waiting for the response each time but surely cusor key movement would have been much better and have removed a major irritation from the game. To be fair movement is facilitated by holding down ENTER which allows you continuous movement in the direction previously specified. When negotating obstacles the manoeuvres of the monsters about the screen can be a distraction as you cannot progress further until the monster has moved. The delay can disrupt the rhythm of your input resulting in a load of nonsense e.g., EEN when you thought you had separately moved east twice, then north. This shortcoming is compounded by the absence of DELETE and so whatever gibberish you end up with must be entered. As is more typical of a Yorkshire island than one in the desert, rain stops play.

If you can dodge the assorted monsters, crocodiles, spiders, serpents, etc., and find some fruit trees, and perhaps a pool of water, you will find yourself crossing into new maps where you might well find a dead end. Often the way out is to press the Blue key (1) and enter the sea where you can swim along merrily with only the serpents posing any threat. The sea washes against the bottom of the map and is useful for crossing map boundaries quickly until you meet a constriction forcing you onto land or serpent-infested waters. Here lies a minor bug. If you tire of swimming, or if the serpent should get you, and you die, you continue with your next life where you left off. However, you set off again in the Red key (2) land mode. The solution is simple enough – press the Blue key once more.

When you come to a sticky end all is not lost by any means. You have twenty or so lives left – there's that Automata humour again. Your



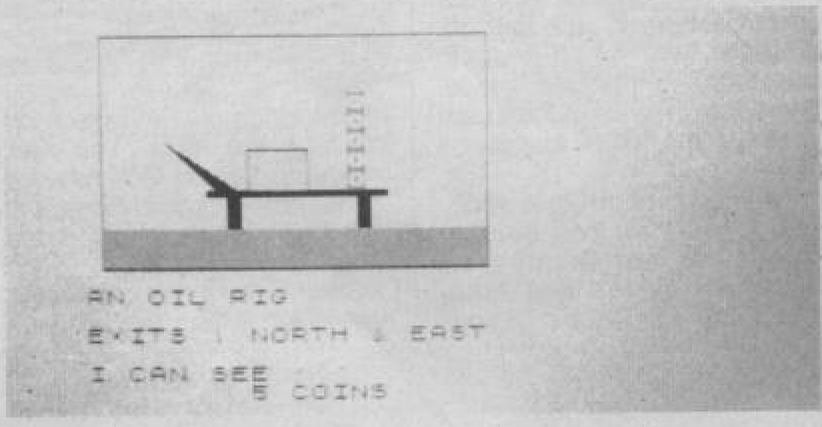
rejuvenation is effected on imbibing the elixir. The next time you die you look forward to the musical accompaniment with the suitably sad end; a dud note.

Crusoe is a very different type of adventure that will take

RUBY RUNABOUT

Producer: **Scorpio Software**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Author: **Andrew Reed**

Ruby Runabout describes itself as a crazy fun-packed adventure. The cassette cover depicts a scene of fun and frolic with larger than life cartoon characters. The game's price leads one to expect a very ordinary adventure and in many ways this proves to be the case.



You play Reggie the Ruby Robber, the alliterated anti-hero who has his sights set on the Rocksalmon Ruby, the most priceless gem in the world. He runs a garage, when he's not busy thieving, and your adventure starts at the petrol pumps. Is this comment directed at garage owners I ask myself or is it just the crummiest plot ever to package a computer game? Your quest is to get to the ruby first, but if you take too long you may find it has moved, so don't waste time. Having played the game and discovered some of its more dubious secrets, I can reveal that I have not got the foggiest what these instructions are about. But if you endeavour to shed any light on this matter don't write to tell me about it because this is the sort of game where if things don't quite make sense it doesn't really matter. It could be the price, or the thin plot, or perhaps it's the grievance felt when every programmer worth his microdrive is struggling with the limitations of 40K of memory, this programmer has, with an inefficient style, ventured to fill up as much possible with redundant code.

The game uses no memory saving techniques, and no wonder, since only 31K is actually used leaving 9K idle. Simple memory conservation could almost have halved the length of the program. To give two examples; variable names are up to eleven characters long while graphics use reams of Plot and Draw representing a vast waste in memory and is, these days, unacceptable in games thought to have any commercial value. Surely you expect a commercial program to offer something beyond that which the average hacker could achieve, no mater what the asking price.

Back to the cassette cover. You'll discover forty locations, twenty of which have graphic illustrations, and using your imagination and sense of humour, survive the journey to locate and remove Rocksalmon Ruby.

The only humour remarkable enough to remember is the comment that greets you when you examine the tape to be told – it's a Sony. That is unless you count the instant death meted out by the policeman should you be caught dropping a toffee wrapper. 'A policeman approaches you with a truncheon, you look at him so he hits you over the head with it for dropping litter.' Such occurrances are common, where attempting to kill almost anything will mark your early departure from the game. Anything from a park attendant to a lowly wasp can present a threat but could you really expect an altercation with a car wash to be fatal? At times it can seem that everything you try ends up killing you for little justifiable reason.



I admit it's just possible I may have missed some of the humour as my interest finally flagged before completing the game. As for using your imagination you will indeed need it since the game requires mental contortions to explain the odd juxtapositions of locations and objects. An oil rig lies directly south of a post box, a wigwam is in close proximity to an igloo, while by a building site – what's this? – The Suez. Oh! Uh? Many other locations are mysteriously unyielding. You seem unable to cross the bridge or swim the river. Further, no access can be made to a single building you meet. As for the objects, would you really expect to find a blowtorch in a gym, or a file in a flower bed? You don't find the petrol at the petrol station but at the windmill. There is no strong storyline to explain these discrepancies.

Inserting a coin at the fruit machine thankfully does not result in death. In fact you win with your first attempt. Sadly you win on each sebsequent attempt and you neither loose the coin you've used or gain the coins you win. You can sense any atmosphere fading away. Later the game has you scaring an elephant with a very elusive mouse and another scenario has you creeeping over pressure pads sure in the belief that your step will be that much daintier dressed in slippers.

The graphics are simple but effective enough. So as not to hold up what is an entirely Basic program the graphics are marked out with simple Draw and Plot commands. The colour changes at every location but some of the colours used do not mix well. The bridge appears blank on a b/w TV and only reveals a black bridge against a red background clearly on a favourably adjusted colour set. A lot of input scrolls up to push the picture and location description up off the screen.

Ruby Runabout is a short and unimaginative adventure with a weak plot and no theme to speak of. The are too few problems and too many early exits. Good features include a pleasant intro tune and a very quick response time. This game is about a third of the price of many classic adventure games and I can't help feeling that here you get a third of an adventure, both as regards size and quality.

Difficulty: Moderate
Graphics: Small graphics in some locations.
Presentation: Average – Good
Input Facility: Spectrum input
Response: Quite fast
General Rating: Poor

Atmosphere	3
Vocabulary	4
Logic	3
Debugging	9
Overall Value	6

Crusoe

a lot of playing before that which you are suposed to achieve becomes clear. It will appeal to that group of players who find text adventures too demanding and unexciting, and like their games served up with a sense of humour.

Difficulty: How long is a piece of string?
Graphics: Shows map of island on which your character Crusoe is moved from block to block
Presentation: Very good
Input Facility: No delete, irritating
Response: Fast but replies often confusing
Special Features: The game is difficult to categorize, not a traditional style adventure
General Rating: Fair.

Atmosphere	5
Vocabulary	4
Logic	5
Debugging	7
Overall Value	5



You are commanding a squadron of four ground attack aircraft...

The mission is seemingly hopeless.

Fly along the river at zero altitude, twisting and turning crazily to stay within its tortuous banks, blasting at anything and everything in sight. Especially the bridges.

Three of your jets are held in reserve while you are pitched against Battleships, Enemy Aircraft, Land Tanks, Balloons, Helicopter Gunships. All intent only on your destruction.

And destroy you they will, if you don't get them first. You'll need to keep an eye on your fuel gauge. But take comfort, you can take fuel on board from one of the special depots.

If you get hit – and nobody has yet reached the end of the river – your next reserve starts at the last bridge you blasted on your way through!

Each target you destroy adds to your points score.

Like all Activision Software, River Raid will hold you and keep you coming back for more.

Chocks away!

Lose yourself in the world of

ACTIVISION.®

BEYOND

CHALLENGING SOFTWARE

From the Ruins of
Blasted Ushgarak
I pledge that the Moonprince's
triumph be short lived
Shareth my daughter will
lure him to
her frozen Empire and
to his doom
this I vow for this is

Doomdark's Revenge



The Game that'll keep you up after MIDNIGHT !

	Quantity	
Please send me **Doomdark's Revenge** (Spectrum £9.95) [But not unless you've already experienced PART ONE!		
The Lords of Midnight (Spectrum £9.95)		
Order Hotline 0858 34567. Enquiries 01-837 3899. Total Price £		

I enclose a Postal Order/Cheque payable to **Beyond**, or charge my credit card

Card Number
Access/Visa (Delete as necessary)

Name

Address

Post Code

Signed

Please rush me details of the **Beyond** Club! ☐

Beyond Competition House, Farndon Road, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE19 9NR

K·E·N·T·I·L·L·A

KENTILLA

Producer: **Micromega**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£6.95**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Derek Brewster**

Kentilla is Micromega's first step out (from the realms of 3D) into lands shrouded with mists where things rumble in the night. They have apparently done so with due care and consideration of the market and with an author who, though fortuitously adept at high quality arcade games, holds text adventures as his first love. Ideally, *Kentilla* should have been included in the Adventure Trail, but that would obviously have been very unethical of us since the authors are the same! Micromega describes *Kentilla* as a richly devious adventure and it is very much so.

The setting is Caraland (the mythical home of Derek Brewster). Grako has returned from the flames of the Abyss after a corridor was opened for a few short seconds as Vel-



nor's soul was hurled through the void to the flames. Grako has taken residence in the Black Tower and now has within his grasp the Moonstone of Aigrath, the source of Velnor's power. The scene is nicely set on the inlay card and links neatly to Derek's earlier adventure *Velnor's lair* (Quicksilva).

The story starts off for real in front of Ogeron's house with exits North, West, East and South through a door. What now?

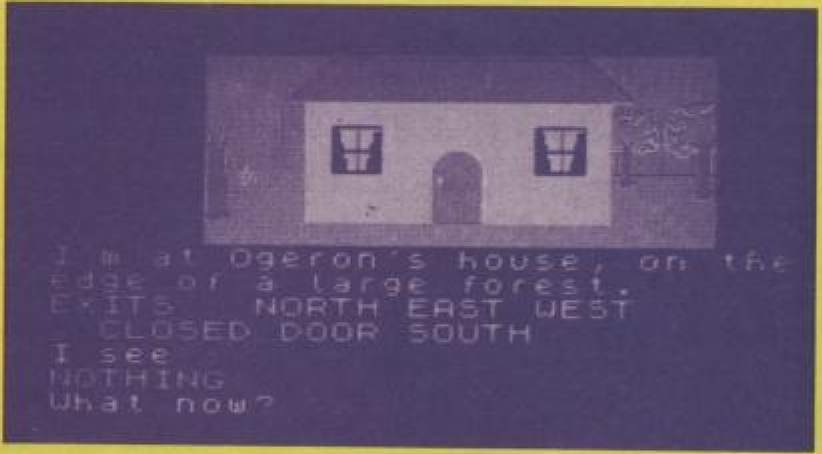
As a reviewer of adventures, Derek Brewster has been apparently working out a universal means of making adventures more accessible and friendly to use, and in *Kentilla* we can see much of this at work. There are good location descriptions throughout and they generally tell you what you need to know but, as one might expect, EXAMINE is widely used to reveal much more than is instantly apparent within a location. This is most richly used in conjunction with the graphics which are not just pretty adjuncts to brighten up the page, but contain real clues. So, for instance, on entering a hall, and in need of a torch (these aren't to be found left lying around on forest paths) it is worth taking the graphic which shows the walls dotted with burning torches quite seriously. EXAMINE WALL results in a piece of vitally interesting information – the text verifies what you see, and TAKE TORCH reveals that you are now carrying same.

The graphics throughout carry this idea on and it adds a new dimension to the classic style adventure where the first thing to do, presuming there are no savage creatures about, is to start asking questions about what you see as well as read. In themselves, the graphics are small but neat and to the point, avoiding useless wastage of memory.

Kentilla is an interactive game. Life carries on with or without you and in moments of indecision the WAIT command can be useful. The interaction also allows conversations with other characters, all of whom have a life of their own and may choose to be helpful or not. At the start it is comforting to discover that Ogeron (despite the dubious name) is quite friendly and indeed hands you the sword Kentilla which you so desperately need. Another pleasant creature is Elva, who, with her ability to carry so many things, is all too easily treated like a packhorse after a few locations. These characters may be spoken to by using quotees as in SAY TO OGERON "GIVE ME SWORD".

Another element which is unusual is the text editor which is there to aid input. Using CAPS SHIFT with some of the numeric keys allows the player to delete character to the left of the cursor, insert a space, move cursor left or right and recall the last command. As the insert points out, this last command can be conveniently used in lengthy battle sequences where KILL URGA may rapidly be changed without retyping everything into EXAM URGA.

So much for the techniques, what about the game. The object is to return Grako to the place from whence he came, the flames of the Abyss, and it is your task together with the sword Kentilla. It is packed with devious problems and will take the experienced adventurer a long time to get right through it. Lateral – even on occasion some unpleasant – thinking is required to overcome a number of thorny problems. Right actions can make friends of enemies who may then do things for you that you are unable to do. One thing you *are* able to do in *Kentilla* is LOOK. This useful command can have a similar function as EXAMINE, for example, LOOK IN CHEST but it may also be employed for seeing ahead before making a move as in LOOK EAST. Just LOOK on its



own will redescribe the location. It may seem a small point but the direction LOOK command adds an element of immediate strategy to *Kentilla* and spotting some dreadful Urgamaul before leaping into its location can leave you prepared for fight or flight.

Kentilla is a very good adventure which offers the right level of difficulty so that you can wander around for a while without attempting to solve the quest, thus acquainting yourself with Caraland and its inhabitants and learning how to interact with them. This is required quite frequently and first impressions of characters, aggressive or passive, can be, and are often intended – to be misleading. A word of warning – *Kentilla* is also a very, very long adventure to play through, not because it has thousands of locations but because you will need to retrack, deviate, return and revisit all the while – there is no straightforward linearity here. And this is not just a case of that old adventure problem, the amount of objects you can carry, since Elva, poor thing, is as strong as an ox. The only drawback we discovered was inputting. The computer seems to accept each letter typed in a little slowly with the result that you can trip up over letters when typing in commands, although the sophisticated text editor helps here – but perhaps it is the very sophistication that has slowed acceptance. It's a small point, however and to be borne in mind when typing fast in battles!

Kentilla is a sure winner as an adventure with many devious problems which should keep any adventurer busy through the coming winter months and it's excellent value for money. Just one tip; your loyal sidekick can be very helpful when giving and taking things.

Robin Candy & Roger Kean.

Difficulty: difficult almost from the start, but presents an always attractive challenge
Graphics: above average, small but important – a rare thing
Presentation: good
Input facility: a trifle slow but very user-friendly, full sentence
Response: fast
Special features: character interaction and conversation
General rating: excellent

Atmosphere	8
Vocabulary	9
Logic	9
Debugging	9
Overall	10



THE WRATH OF MAGRA

Producer: Master Vision
Retail Price: £12.50
Authors: R. Carnell, S.A. Galoway, S. Kirk



Wrath of Magra, following *Black Crystal* in the Third Continent Series, is a mammoth work consisting of a substantial text, *The Book of Shadows*, a smaller booklet giving interesing and detailed playing instructions, and three episodes of the adventure contained within two cassettes. Episode 1 differs markedly from the other two and the game must be played in sequence since the data given at the end of episode 1 is needed to begin episode 2, and so with 2 and 3. Each episode requires a considerable effort in its own right and you are unlikely to proceed very far without SAVE. The packaging goes to great lengths to point out that the characters are entirely ficticious; any resemblance to actual persons living or dead is coincidental. More curious rubric warns you of the dangers of meddling with the occult. You are advised not to drink acids, eat Deadly Nightshade or turn people into frogs. Sound advice indeed.

You play the Knight of Star Jewel, Hero of the *Volcanic Dungeon*, who although only a man, has won the esteem of the elves for slaying the witch Magra and rescuing the elfin princess Edora. But now all your efforts would seem in vain. The witch's body was retrieved by the Ice Giants and now lives again in the Black Mountains due to the restorative powers of the Black Arts. Princess Edora is now chained to a wall in a cold, dimly lit cell deep within the bowels of Amosthen 'Ugal, her once beautiful face disfigured with running sores. She is possessed and the only way to save her is to destroy Magra.

The episodes have a table in the top right hand of the display. There are eight factors, some of which are inextricably linked.

STRENGTH: if your power drops to zero due to tiredness or wounds, you die. SPIRITUAL STRENGTH and FAITH: the more spells you successfully cast the higher your faith. MOON PHASE. PERCENTAGE: chance of killing a monster, changes during a fight. WOUNDS: effect your strength and ability to fight. GOLD: bits. TIME: 24 hr clock.

Time plays an important part in *Wrath of Magra*. Five minutes real time represents one hour in the game. You use the passing phases of the moon to help weave your spells and as the days pass you must satisfy your hunger, thirst and tiredness. Your early forays are frustrated by your inability to enter buildings until they open next day.

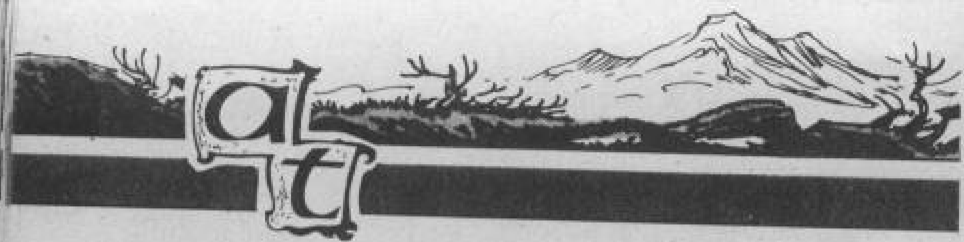
Episode 1 has you in the village at night where some strong force prevents the casting of spells. This section, featuring high resolution graphics, is designed to allow you to collect, buy and exchange treasures and ingredients using BUY and SELL. You have a silver sword, a shield, Fendal's ring, fur for warmth, and the Star Jewel, a gem from which you are never separated. Not every feature is described and so you have to guess where it might be feasible to pick up Deadly Nightshade, for example.

Episode 1 certainly has exceptionally good graphic representations of the locations but the circuitous route taken to achieve this result in delays of up to fifteen seconds. It requires the time taken in many adventures to draw a picture simply to remove the graphic from the last location. When entering a building the last graphic isn't removed at all – you are inside a cottage and yet you see the cottage. Not such a heinous crime you may think, but we're dealing with a dedicated 40K of program here, a preliminary to the more complex adventure itself, and I think no byte should have been left unalterd in the attempt to put some exceptional graphics at each and every location. The doctor's look like, and is, the farm house. . . and the woodcutter's cottage – eighteen seconds worth of graphics.

The vocabulary is confoundedly unhelpful. Its friendliness has you puzzled at ENTER TOWER. The program requires the full entry, ENTER WIZARDS TOWER and I mean full – no abbreviations. Were this all there might be hope, but what about this for a supposed 'megagame', GET VAMPIRE BAT SALIVA marks a fifteen second wait while GET RED TOADSTOOLS requires seventeen seconds. A huge task confronts you here. There are some pouches in the Wizard's Tower nd you must guess their contents. This has you searching the back pages of the Book of Shadows to see which spell ingredients you might pick up. This task proves laborious when you consider the delays when no abbreviations are allowed and the shortes wait you can expect is fifteen seconds for each attempt. When you move off to the next location the screen scrolls in a manner which lets down the otherwise tidy presentation; the last location's description only partly scrolls up off the screen leaving its possible exits behind. So I leave episode 1 with what may well prove to be an unshakable conviction. This program is badly coded.

Episode 2 finds you in the mines beneath the Black Mountains where you cast spells and build up your faith. You follow the three maps provided showing the three levels you must tackle, being careful not to fall down any chasm to your death. In episode 3 you are in Magra's fortress hunted by the evil witch herself. As you move around the fortress it is mapped out at the top left of the screen. The monsters are created by the computer and if you dodge these you must face and destroy Magra to survive.

Episode 2, alas, does not fair any better than 1. In fact things have taken a decided turn for the worse. When loading, the maze takes so long to set up you could be forgiven for thinking the program had crashed. The impressive high resolution graphics of episode 1 are



replaced by token graphics, but what really jars is the wholly unimpressive input routine which is so inept as to border on the ridiculous. The best way to get round this unnecessary obstacle is to count as in music 1 & 2 & 3, or in this case, G & E & T etc. The problem is compounded by the insistence on the entry of complete words with a few abbreviations permitted. A main feature of this episode is the combat routine which is notable for the seeming unassailability afforded to you should you choose the shield for defence and the silver sword for attack. An overused, yet still effective, Anglo Saxon word denoting procreation is accepted, and after a few moments struggling with this input routine, you'll need it.

Wr th of Magra is a significant work full of imagination and atmosphere. It comes with a large book which resembles a cross between a Tolkien novel and a Dungeons and Dragons handbook. The playing instructions are full and creditable. The program itself is entirely in Basic and suffers from an absence of that expertise which separates a magazine listing from a top class game. The delays in the program are a disappointment, the poor input routine is scadalous. Taken together they are ruinous.

Wrath of Magra is a package with an exciting theme. What is missing is an equally exciting computer program to develop that theme.

Difficulty: Average but time consuming
Graphics: Some, excellent
Presentation: Very good
Input facility: Average to awful
Response: Very slow
Special Features: 3 programs with different playing styles
General rating: Poor

Atmosphere	6
Vocabulary	5
Logic	6
Debugging	8
Overall Value	5

One of the most popular topics in the Signpost mailbag each month is what exactly makes a good adventure. Although there is much variation in opinion on this subject, the general trend would appear to be in favour of the imaginative, well-written, text adventure. I think opinions are summed up well by **Ms. M. Griffiths** *of Poole who supplies the following points which she considers to make her ideal adventure.*

'In text adventures there should be good, full descriptions of locations to create atmosphere. In illustrated adventures, the pictuer should be displayed only at the first visit to the location unless recalled.

Problems should respond to logical, or sensible, solutions.



There must be a SAVE/LOAD facility, and it should be possible to play again without reloading the whole program.

There should be an examine and/or search option – much more interesting.

There should be some flexibility in commands accepted so the program is not excessively finickyt in rejecting slight variations in phrases.

Early problems should be reasonably easy so the average player can get some way into the game. Nothing is worse than being stuck right at the start of an adventure. (Derek – try playing *Eye of Bain*!)

A sense of humour, if possible.'

Castle Blackstar *from SCR counts highly in the esteem of* **Mike Arnantov** *of Flackwell Heath, Buckinghamshire, who appears from his letter to be an ardent text-only fan. Mike say of* **Castle Blackstar**. . .

'Of all the traditional style adventures it is definitely the best'.

But he has a problem; could anyone help Mike pass the dragon? I must confess, I haven't as yet seen the game, but with 75% on the Crash rating system it must be good.

Continuing the theme of text adventures, they now look ominously clost to extinction. Even Level 9, master craftsmen of the prose adventure, have fallen in line with the concensus and their latest, **Return to Eden***, will boast graphics. The reason for this switch is quite simple, buyers in the chain stores and distributors are loath to take on text-only games assuming everyone wants colourful graphics these days. It seems rather odd that I am presented with an opposing view. Do the chain stores give us what we want or do we buy what they give us? Maybe you might like to let me know your views on this subject.*

I must thank all those who gave me the solution to Artic's force field problem. I hadn't realised so many had escaped from the **Planet of Death***. Once again I am in need of some help. Two recurring problems in the Signpost mailbag which have me completely stumped are; where's the gin in* **Dennis through the Looking Glass***, and how do you get through the musical door in* **Fantasia Diamond***? If you could let me know the solution to either of these problems I, and many others similarly afflicted, would be eternally grateful.*

This months £12 of software is on its way to **Miss M. Griffith** *of Poole.*

Planet of Death
How do you get past the forcefield?
IFMQ, SFGMFDU GJFME, SFGMFDU FJFME, XBMUA

Urban Upstart
Alan Parker, Brighton
How do you enter the town hall?
you will need the SFE UBQF

Temple of Vran
Bradley Owen, Caerphilly, Mid Glamorgan
What use is the kitten?
XBSUT IBUF DBUT
How do you get over the lava?
VTF UIF TUFQMBEEFS BOE USBNQPMJOF
How do you get through the hole in the wall?
ZPV OFFE UIF TUFQMBEEFS

Classic Adventure
Bradley Owen
How can I get past the fissure?
XBWF SPE

Velnor's Lair
John Denton, Selby
how do you get over the molten lava chasm?
ESPQ UIF ESBHPO TUBUVFVUF BOE FOUFS UJBNBU

Espionage Island
Christopher Mitchell, Stubbington
How can I get out of the plane?
HFU QBSBDIVUF, XFBS QBSBDIVUF, QVMM MFWFS

Golden Baton
N. Best, Bristol
How do get past the crab?
GFFE JU XJUI TMVHT

Fantasia Diamond
Ian Hobbs
How do you get started
MPPL JOUP UIF DVQCPBSET BOE HFU SPCPU TUBSUFE

Invincible Island
Leslie Barrett
What do you do after you have found the seven parchments?
HFU UIF USFBTVSF, ZPV XJMM OFFE B TXPSE, TLVMM BOE TQBEF

Temple of Vran
Michael Whitmell, Northampton
How do you get across the quicksand?
UJF SPQF UP BDOF UIFO UISPX DBOF

Colditz
Paul Scott, Scunthorpe
How to get the wire cutters without being shot
GJSTU HFU GMPPSCPBSE



SLOMOSLOMOSLOMOSLOMOSL

If you think you've seen all kinds of Spectrum peripherals and that nothing can surprise you – then watch this space.



Steve Lloyd from Cambridge Computing has sent us a little device which should help any arcade addict get past the most critical stages of any game requiring fast reflexes. The unit is called quaintly **SLOMO** and the logo features a pace-setting snail. Yes, you've guessed it, this little gadget provides slow motion and freeze frame facility for any game or program running on the Spectrum. It accomplishes this by setting a *Bus Request* signal on the system bus. The Z80 acknowledges and goes into 'hibernation' (high impedance state) until the signal is called off. Two little push button switches provide either instant freeze frame (for as long as the key is pressed) or timer mode, which allows you to vary the delay time of the internal timer/monostable so that you can adjust continually from normal speed right down to stand still. An LED indicates the timer mode.

SLOMO is easy to use. The edge connector features an extension port for other peripherals and plugs in at the back of the Spectrum with a lead connecting up to the control box. The two push button switches are located at the front and annotated FREEZE FRAME and SLOW MOTION. When SLOW MOTION is selected, the red LED indicator comes on and the speed of the game can be set via the central speed control know. **SLOMO** is compatible with any add-on which does not require the *Bus Request* signal.

Apart from cheating at your favourite games and acquiring HALL OF SLIME fame with ridiculous and dishonest point scores, it can be handy for screen photographs. The fiddliest moments of a game can be captured in time and some of this issue's screen pics would not have been possible without SLOMO. Yes, you guessed it, SLOMO has already been requisitioned by our in-house camera team and all the begging in the world will not bring the unit back to me. Cambridge Computing foresees SLOMO's use as an educational tool for accommodating the program speed to the individual pupil or lecture and also as a development help for programmers. The cost of SLOMO is **£14.95 and if you ask me, you can buy a lot of time with that. . .**

Available from:
Cambridge Computing Research ltd.
61 Ditton Walk
Cambridge CB5 8QD
Tel. (0223) 214451

OMOSLOM

THE ROAR OF A TIGER. . .

On an exploratory walk throught the PCW Show stands CRASH bumped into Steve Rutherford and Alan Marshall. Steve is a director of Tiger Distribution. Alan is in charge of the computer division of John Menzies. The ensuing discussion and a following visit to Tiger's new headquarters in Warrington, Cheshire, revealed a few interesting fact.

Tiger Distribution started up some 22 months ago and was one of the first software distributors in the country. They were the first to realise that the initial mail order business from software houses was expanding to specialist retailers, who needed to be serviced profitably by a well organised distribution company. The modest beginnings in a three storey pub house soon paid off and today Tiger is operating from a new factory unit and employs some 30 people. Their range includes over 1,000 titles from over 100 software houses. They service many independent retailers, but also have a much sought after contract with one of the big multiples, **John Menzies**.

They work very closely with Alan Marshall, who is responsible for the computer division of John Menzies. In fact due to the sale or exchange agreement, Tiger performs the stock control of all the computer cassettes in the several hundred retail shops of Menzies with the help of their in-house mainframe computer. This guarantees a strict control of the sales stock. 'We have learnt from the past', Steve says, 'the shelf life of software titles, including smash hits, is becoming increasingly shorter, which in turn means stiffer selection and tighter stock control.'

The mainframe services also the many telesales terminals and this in conjunctio with a strong telesales team, which includes two ex-Imagine employees, provides an excellent 24 hour service for the many independent retailers from a fleet of vans operated by regional sales forces.

'There is plenty of space for expansion', **Owen Hargreaves**, chairman of Tiger, tells me. 'We have plans for converting the factory unit into a purpose built office complex and work for this has already begun. Road access to Warrington is very good and we are therefore converting a large area into a regional Cash and Carry shop, another industry first.'

Adiran Fisher, managing director of Tiger, is quick to point out that they are active on the export market and are building up a mulitlingual sales force. Asked whether the electronic software distribution may pose a threat, Adrian replies that they had evaluated the system and had found it to be superior to the existing. The retailer still has to carry stocks of inlay cards, manuals and packaging, which means the over-stocking problem still exists. Another problem is the transfer or duplicating time of the machine, as certain retail shops have peak selling periods with a sale every four seconds, something the machine could not cope with. Asked about his opinion regarding software piracy, Adrian believes a lot of illegal copying is going on, but that even if the pirating could be clamped down, the sales would only increase marginally, as the end user has only a limited amount of pocket money to spend. Nonetheless he is interested in any effective copy protective system. He has also reservations on the success of the coming MSX range, as the industry standard is achieved by using present technology offered in the future. His belief is that if the home computer market is to survive, it will require valuable improvements in the area of screen graphics, sound and complexity of the games and that therefore the hardware would have to improve accordingly. Adrian foresees that in a years time we will be able to look back smilingly at existing games and be amazed at the simplicity of offerings. Let's hope he is right, so that we can look forward to even more amazing games. . .



The Red Kipper Flies at Midnight

YOU GET HOME ONE EVENING to discover a message on your answering machine. Something you'd thought hidden for good has reared its ugly head once again. Valkyrie 17 is active.

Over the next five nights a series of frantic phone calls convince you that the matter deserves further investigation. You receive a dossier on the activities of Valkyrie 17. Pieced together from fragmentary reports culled from the last forty years you slowly begin to put the whole thing together. Drakenfeur, Heinrich and Reichsmuller. The badge pressed into your hand on the station at____________. And that last desperate call for help from the Glitz Hotel overlooking Lake Bruntz.

Your cover is good. Very good in fact. You spend a few days sniffing around and then head up towards Lake Bruntz. You check in to the Glitz Hotel. It's the last lead you have. You seem to be getting nowhere.

Then on your way to the bar you sense a movement in the shadows. You feel a blow on your temple. And everything goes black...

Valkyrie 17 is an Adventure featuring both graphic and text locations. You will meet several different characters some of whom may help you while others see your demise as their sole purpose in life.

Included in the pack is a comprehensive dossier on Valkyrie 17. On the reverse of the cassette tape are the answerphone messages. And then of course there's the game itself.

LOADING TIME	**5½ minutes.**	**MICRODRIVE**	**X/FER FUNCTION**
LOCATIONS	**100+**	**FUN FACTOR 8**	
LEVEL	**?**		
SOUND	**Beep Beep**		

HINTS

Watch your back, try not to get killed and mind your language.

VALKYRIE 17

Valkyrie 17 is distributed by Palace Virgin Gold, 69 Flempton Road, London E10 7NL. Telephone: 01-539 5566. Available from all leading wholesalers.

fantasy SOFTWARE

The battle could be yours.....
.....but it won't be easy!



This is 'ZIGGY', shown above, in his exploratory capsule and is a true representation of the on-screen graphics.

THE PYRAMID

THE PYRAMID is an arcade style game which has a very adventurous feel to it.

The Pyramid contains 120 chambers on 15 levels. In order to get from one chamber to another you must fight off the indigenous aliens to collect an energised crystal which will neutralize the force field guarding the two exits.

The Pyramid is inhabited by a total of 60 weird and exotic alien types, all of which are beautifully animated. You will meet a whole variety of demons, droids, insects and monsters, with a sprinkling of the more unusual, the extra-terrestrial tweezers, galactic strawberry, cosmic claw, mutant eye, plus a whole host of entities that defy rational description. You'll no doubt invent your own nicknames.

You proceed to explore the pyramid from top to bottom with the difficulty generally increasing with the depth of level. Depending on the choice of exit from each chamber you are likely to have a different game every time you play.

Apart from the challenge of trying to achieve the highest score possible the pyramid contains a number puzzle to solve. The more chambers you successfully visit the more information is gathered to enable you to discover the secret numbers of the pyramid. The puzzle won't take you days to solve, it will probably take you a few months.

DOOMSDAY CASTLE

DOOMSDAY CASTLE consists of a labyrinth of 74 complexly inter-connected Halls and Passages where you will meet a whole host of adversaries serving the infinitely evil Scarthax, the Garthrogs, the Orphacs, the phenomenally nasty Googly Bird and the Urks which manifest themselves in over fifty unbelievably weird and wonderful guises.

Scarthax has scoured the Universe to bring together the six ancient stones of lifeforce. United in Doomsday Castle they are being used to wield an irresistable power over the cosmos, emanating waves of corruption through every galaxy.

To save the Universe, you must battle your way through the Castle to find and collect the six stones and use their force against Scarthax to destroy Doomsday Castle, hopefully escaping yourself before the final cataclysmic explosion.

The task is not easy (saving the Universe never is!) and it will take you many games to unfold the structure of Doomsday Castle and discover the locations of the ancient stones.

The addictive arcade style action will keep you coming back to play but the overall challenge should still keep you occupied for months.

FANTASY SOFTWARE is available from W.H.SMITHS, JOHN MENZIES, BOOTS, LASKYS, GREENS, RUMBELOWS, SPECTRUM GROUP, COMPUTERS FOR ALL and all other good software retailers.

The Pyramid at £5.50 and Doomsday Castle at £6.50 from

FANTASY SOFTWARE, FALCONBERG LODGE, 27A ST GEORGES ROAD, CHELTENHAM, GLOS GL50 3DT despatched by return first class post together with free membership and current newsletter of the Fantasy Micro Club.
Trade Enquiries welcome – telephone 0242-583661.

the LLAMA has LANDED!

...... and it's breeding fast.

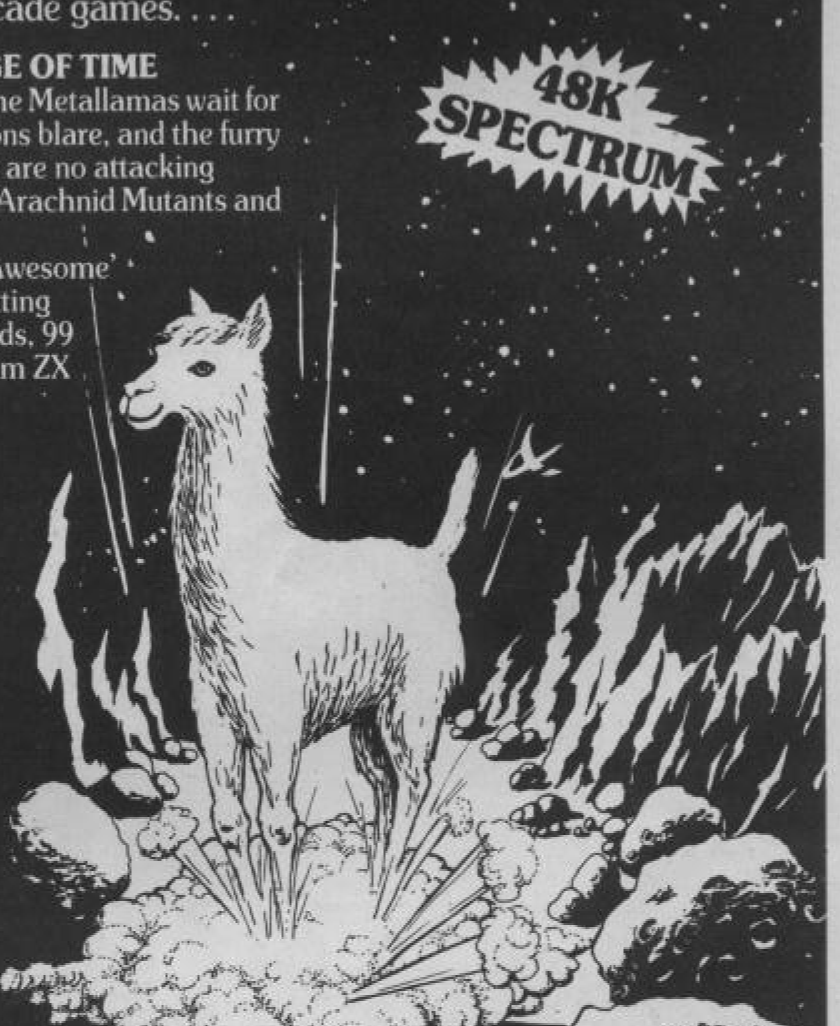
Once upon a time, only Commodore owners could experience the thrill of playing an original game by Jeff 'Awesome' Minter. Lesser mortals could only sit and stare in wonderous rapture at the furry arcade action brought to you by Llamasoft.

BUT NOW THERE IS HOPE.

Dragon owners were the first to see the light of day, but now Salamander Software is pleased as punch to announce that selected titles

ARE NOW AVAILABLE FOR THE 48K SPECTRUM.

Yes that's right, Salamander is now producing titles for the Spectrum, and the first of these are two great arcade games....



METAGALACTIC LLAMAS BATTLE AT THE EDGE OF TIME

On a forlorn observation post at the edge of the galaxy, the Metallamas wait for a sign of Zzyaxian spaceships. Suddenly the alarm claxons blare, and the furry friends of freedom rush to the fore only to find that there are no attacking spaceships, and that they are under attack from Cyborg Arachnid Mutants and Disgusting Weeviloids....

This classic arcade game, originally developed by Jeff 'Awesome' Minter of Llamasoft, features 1 and 2 player options, spitting Llamas, Cyborg Arachnid Mutants, Disgusting Weeviloids, 99 levels of play. Joystick recommended. Supports Spectrum ZX Interface 2 and Kempston joysticks.

MATRIX: GRIDRUNNER II

It is ten years after the infamous Grid Wars, and humanity is once again threatened by the evil droids, only this time they're back in force with new weapons and new allies.

The awesome sequel to the best selling Gridrunner, Matrix features all the old favourites like Droids and Zappers, but increases the panic quotient by adding Diagonal waves, Cosmic Cameloids, Energy deflexors, the Snitch and more.

Game originally developed by Jeff 'Awesome' Minter of Llamasoft. Joystick recommended. Supports Kempston and AGF joystick interfaces.

In space, only the camels can hear you scream.

What some famous people have said...

"What's an arcade game .... Aristotle
"Awesome" .... Jeff Minter
"I prefer elephants" .... Hannibal
"Don't shoot me, I'm only the piano player" Elton John
"Boing" .... Zebedee

Please add 50p P.&P. to all orders. Send A5 SAE for full catalogue.

Cheques or postal orders payable to:

Salamander SOFTWARE

17 Norfolk Road, Brighton, BN1 3AA. Telephone: (0273) 771942.

48K SPECTRUM TITLES **These titles available through Quicksilva Ltd.*

Metagalactic Llamas Battle at the Edge of Time £6.95 • Matrix £6.95 • Gridrunner £6.95* • Traxx £6.95* • Laser Zone £6.95*

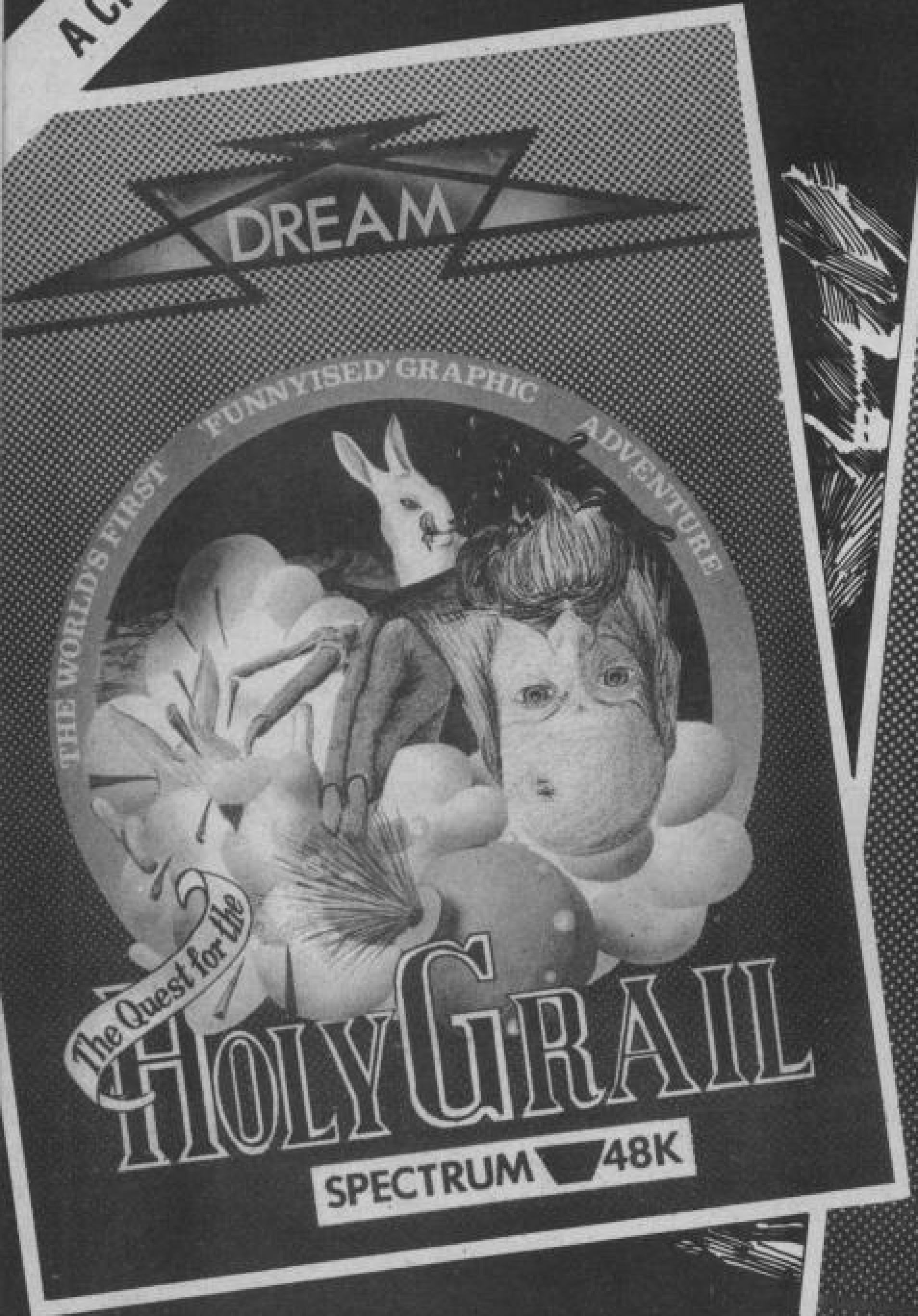
DRAGON 32 TITLES Gridrunner £7.95 • Laser Zone £7.95

GSH

SELECTED TITLES AVAILABLE FROM: John Menzies WHSMITH Boots

A CRASH EXCLUSIVE!!!

AN OPPORTUNITY TO F





£500 Worth of Software to be Won from DREAM SOFT

D DREAM, PERCHANCE TO WIN!



TWARE

Not only could you win the "World's first 'funnyised' adventure" from **DREAM SOFTWARE** – *The Quest for the Holy Grail* – but CRASH offers you a chance to win DREAM SOFTWARE's latest, as yet unreleased adventure **CRYSTAL CAVERN!**

Crystal Cavern is the first adventure to be released by **Dream** for six months. It had been written by Australian programmer **Marg Hutton**. Your quest is to solve the secret of the Cavern – and Dream aren't saying anything more about it yet, except that it is definitely in the 'Moderate to Hard' class!

Quest For the Holy Grail, which has been a firm Adventure Chart favourite, is the madcap anachronistic adventure set somewhere between Arthur's England and Monty Python. Both games normally retail at £5.95, but you could be a lucky winner and receive both of them for free!

Dream Sortware have also produced the unique graphic adventure designer *The Dungeon Builder* and the 100% rated *Machine Code for Beginners*. CRASH reviewed *The Dungeon Builder* back in issue 5 (June). **Dream Software** consist principally of **Les Graddon**, the Managing Director, **Keith Wilkins**, the Technical Director and **Andy Donovan**, Program Evaluation. They have been going for about a year and a half now, marketing programs for authors under the Dream label, and commissioning freelance programmers to do work for them. In connection with which, Les Graddon says, 'We are always on the look out for programs of high quality to market on behalf of programmers, and we give authors a very good deal!' Maybe there's some CRASH readers out there who would be interested?

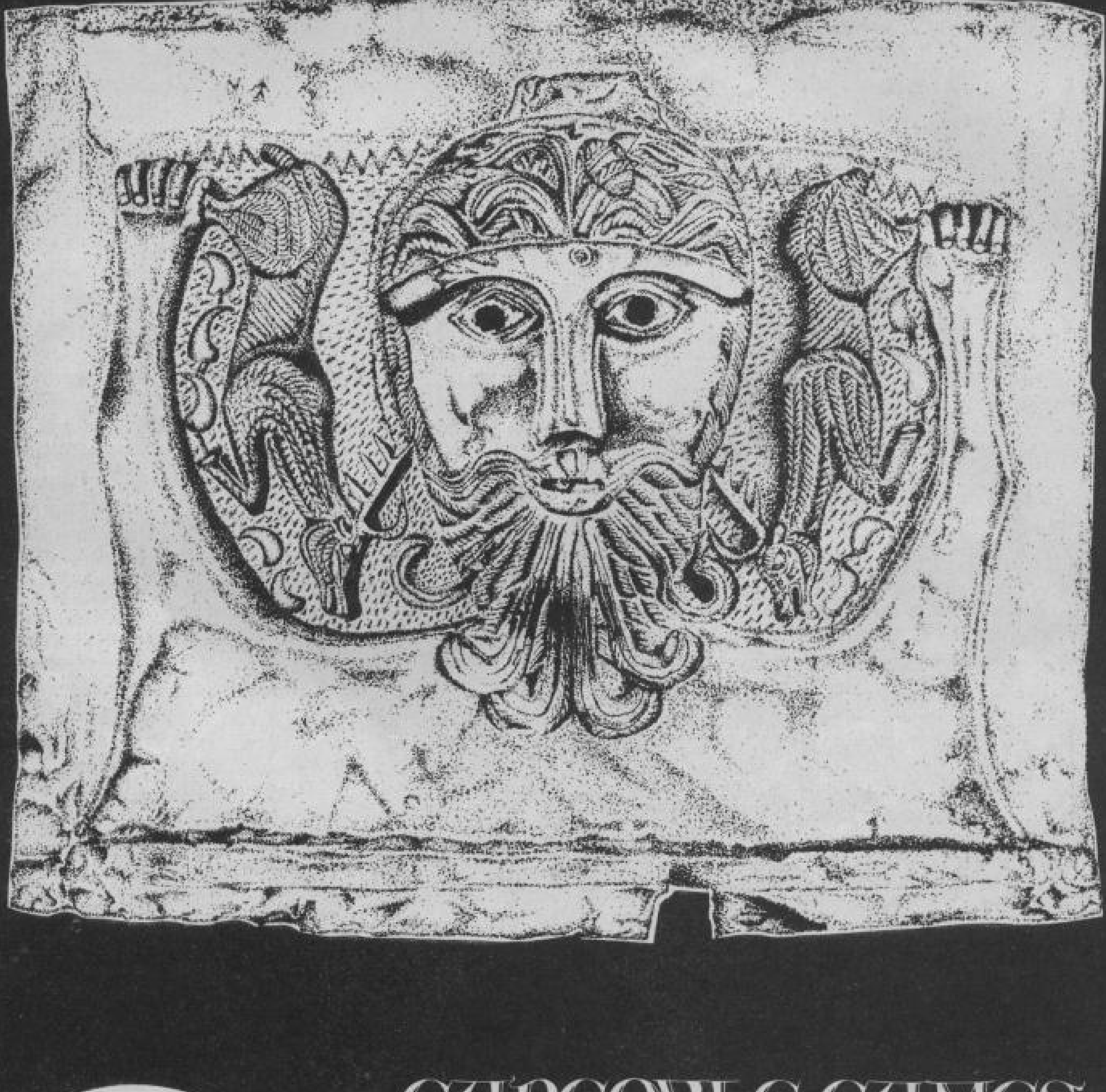
CRASH is proud to be the first to 'launch' Dream's newest adventure in this competition, and maybe you will be one of the lucky winners of **CRYSTAL CAVERN** with the special bonus of receiving **QUEST FOR THE HOLY GRAIL** as well. All you have to do is complete the little competition below and send your answers in on a postcard to **DREAM COMPETITION, CRASH MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB** to arrive no later than first post **November 22**. The first 42 correct entries drawn from the bag will each receive Dream Software's *Quest For the Holy Grail* and their latest adventure game, *Crystal Cavern*.

DREAM COMPETITION

In the three questions below you must find the stated number of words, using the letters of the question's word. Each word you discover must consist of three letters or more and only use each letter once in the new word.

1. Find **eight** words using the letters of **CAVERN**.
2. Find **five** words using the letters of **CRYSTAL**.
3. Find **eight** words using the letters of **HOLY GRAIL**.

TÍR NA NÒG



GARGOYLE GAMES

£9.95 **48K ZX SPECTRUM**

Tir Na Nòg – the land of youth, the other world.

Tir Na Nòg – the kingdom of the sidhe, the home of dagda's cauldron.

Tir Na Nòg – a vast and complex adventure, in a magical celtic landscape.

Tir Na Nòg – a most stunning visual experience, with state-of-the-art film animation.

Tir Na Nòg – a true computer movie.

ALSO FROM GARGOYLE:
THE STUNNING SPACE GAME,
AD ASTRA – £5.95

GARGOYLE GAMES, 74 KING STREET, DUDLEY, WEST MIDLANDS. TEL: DUDLEY 238777

The CRASH HOTLINE

THE CRASH HOTLINE PHONE NUMBER IS 0584 (Ludlow) 3015

HOW TO USE THE CRASH HOTLINE

Method 1
Ring the Hotline telephone number (above) and record your votes on the answering machine. Please speak clearly, spelling out name and address if it's a 'difficult' one! List your five games starting with the number one.

Method 2
Use the coupon below, making sure you fill in all the details. Pop the coupon in an envelope and send it to us. Alternatively you may send a letter if you don't want to cut up the mag.

The telephone Hotline is getting very jammed after a new issue comes out, so bear with us if it's engaged. If all else fails – write in!

Hardly any changes in the top ten this month, just a few reshuffles with *Sabre Wulf* and *Lords of Midnight* maintaining their pre-eminent positions. Microsphere's *Wheelie* is still doing good business, wonder whether their new release *Skool Daze* is in for as long a run of popularity – time will tell! Biggest riser this month is Ocean's *Daley Thompson's Decathlon*, straight in at 16, followed hotfoot by Gremlin's *Monty Mole*, in for the first time at the 22 slot. Nice to see Silversoft's *Worse Thing's Happen at Sea* climbing steadily up another 13 places to this month's 19. *Stop the Express* is also proving a popular play, improving from 41 to 23 with Poppy Soft's *Factory Breakout* also moving up well to the 25 slot. Another newcomer is US Gold's *Beach-Head*, in for the first time at 30, and Melbourne's *Sherlock* adventure appears at 36. Lower down at 47, the first appearance by Realtime with their game *Tank Duel*.

Hotline Winner this month is **Sam Warwick**, Thatcham, Berks; and the four runners-up are; **Miss E. Taylor**, Islington, London N19; **Chris Bowler**, Barrow-on-Trent, Derby; **Simon Ward**, kingston, Nr. Lewes, E. Sussex; and **Andrew Morrison**, Alloa, Scotland.

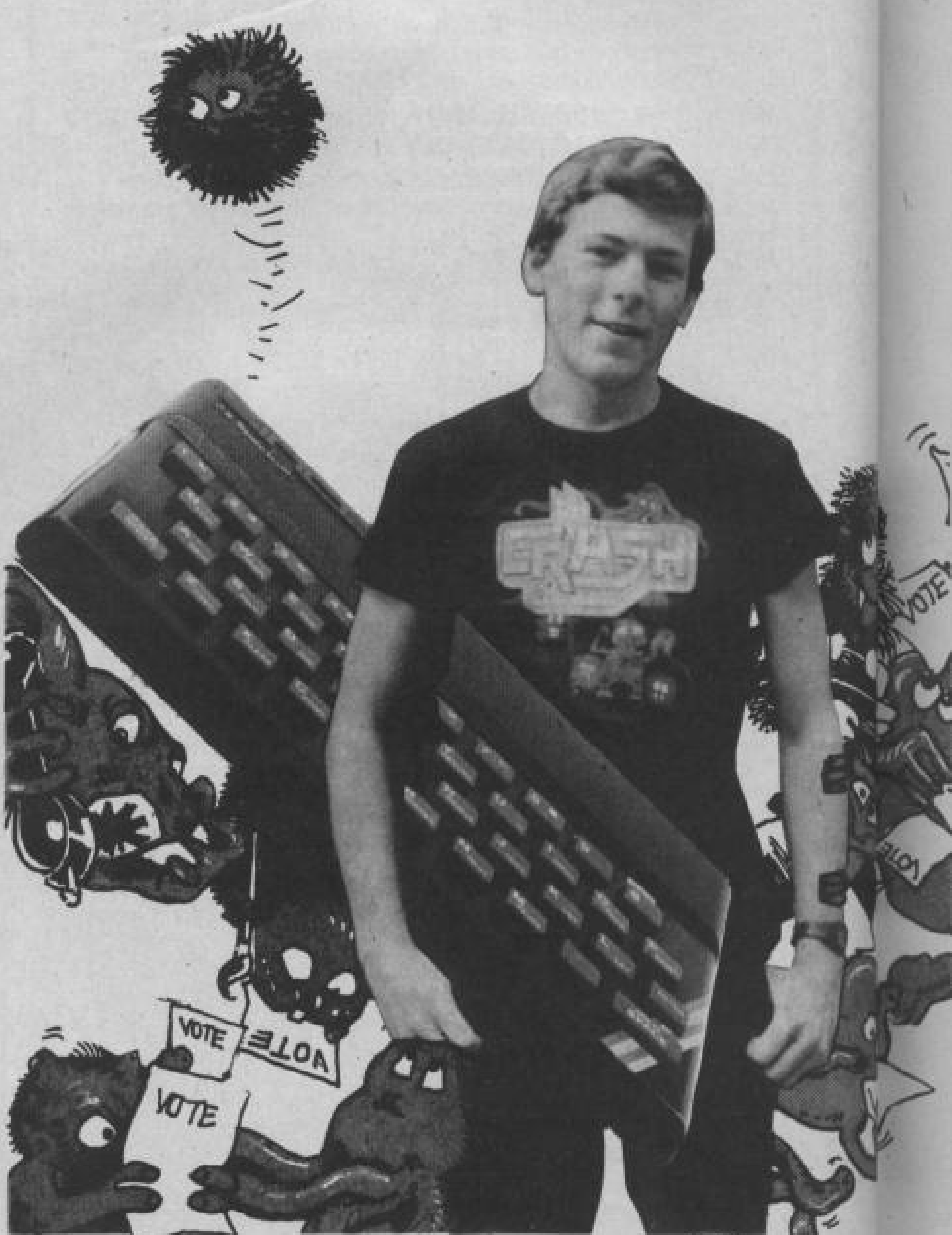
BRILL 'N' FAB HOTLINE PRIZES!!

Whether you phone or write in, all names go into the voluminous bag to be drawn monthly. First out receives **£40 worth of software** plus a CRASH tee shirt, and the five runners-up receive three issues of CRASH free plus a CRASH tee shirt.

Others may try and copy us but the CRASH HOTLINE CHART is the one that counts – and you are the people that make it count.

YOUR VOTE IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT — USE IT PLEASE!

The Adventure Chart winner this month is **Stephen Harris**, Sale, Cheshire; and the four runners-up are; **Graig Sanders**, Stockport, Cheshire; **Daryl Ward**, Wigston, Leicester; **Gavin Davies**, Haverford West, Dyfed; and **S. Marsa**, Swindon, Wilts.



CRASH HOTLINE WRITE IN COUPON
Please use block capitals and write clearly!

Name ....

Address ....

....

Postcode ....

Send your coupon to: **CRASH HOTLINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB**

My top five favourite programs in descending order are:

TITLE	PRODUCER
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

VOTE for the CHARTS

Perhaps it's no surprise to see *Sherlock* leap straight into the charts but it is nice to also see another Level 9 adventure appear from nowhere. *Dungeon Adventure* comes straight in at 7, closely followed by newcomer *Waydor* in the 8 slot. Artic and Richard Shepherd still cling tenaciously to their chart positions, as does Incentive with *Mountains of Ket*. But whatever's happened to *Temple of Vran*, or is everyone still stuck in the mountains? Applications, who have had trouble with the release of *The Tebbit*, are still proving popular with *Denis*; and good to see Interceptor's *Message from Andromeda* in for the first time at 28. Otherwise not many changes overall, just a few shuffles.

CRASH HOTLINE

TOP 50 FOR NOVEMBER

(Figures in parenthesis indicate last month's position)

1	(1)	**SABRE WULF** Ultimate
2	(2)	**LORDS OF MIDNIGHT** Beyond
3	(6)	**MATCHPOINT** Psion/Sinclair
4	(4)	**JET SET WILLY** Software Projects
5	(5)	**ATIC ATAC** Ultimate
6	(7)	**FULL THROTTLE** Micromega
7	(4)	**CODE NAME MAT** Micromega
8	(9)	**LUNAR JETMAN** Ultimate
9	(10)	**MOON ALERT** Ocean
10	(8)	**MANIC MINER** Software Projects
11	(13)	**TLL** Vortex
12	(14)	**WHEELIE** Microsphere
13	(16)	**KOSMIC KANGA** Micromania
14	(12)	**CHUCKIE EGG** A & F Software
15	(18)	**AUTOMANIA** Mikro-Gen
16	(—)	**DALEY THOMPSON'S DECATHLON** Ocean
17	(17)	**TRASHMAN** New Generation
18	(19)	**ANTICS** Bug-Byte
19	(32)	**WORSE THINGS HAPPEN AT SEA** Silversoft
20	(11)	**PSYTRON** Beyond
21	(21)	**THE HOBBIT** Melbourne House
22	(—)	**MONTY MOLE** Gremlin Graphics
23	(41)	**STOP THE EXPRESS** Sinclair
24	(23)	**HULK** Adventure International
25	(33)	**FACTORY BREAKOUT** Poppy Soft
26	(20)	**POGO** Ocean
27	(25)	**AD ASTRA** Gargoyle Games
28	(39)	**SCUBA DIVE** Durell
29	(29)	**ANT ATTACK** Quicksilva
30	(—)	**BEACH-HEAD** US Gold
31	(—)	**3D DEATHCHASE** Micromega
32	(22)	**JETPAC** Ultimate
33	(26)	**THE QUILL** Gilsoft
34	(34)	**FOOTBALL MANAGER** Addictive Games
35	(40)	**PYRAMID** Fantasy
36	(—)	**SHERLOCK** Melbourne House
37	(27)	**ANDROID 2** Vortex
38	(—)	**PSSST** Ultimate
39	(35)	**DOOMSDAY CASTLE** Fantasy
40	(47)	**CAVELON** Ocean
41	(30)	**FIGHTER PILOT** Digital Integration
42	(31)	**MUGSY** Melbourne House
43	(36)	**NIGHT GUNNER** Digital Integration
44	(43)	**ZZOOM** Imagine
45	(24)	**FRED** Quicksilva
46	(50)	**CHEQUERED FLAG** Psion
47	(—)	**TANK DUEL** Realtime
48	(—)	**BUGABOO** Quicksilva
49	(—)	**SPLAT** Incentive
50	(44)	**DEFENDA** Interstalla



CRASH ADVENTURE CHART

1	(1)	**LORDS OF MIDNIGHT** Beyond
2	(—)	**SHERLOCK** Melbourne House
3	(6)	**SNOWBALL** Level 9 Computing
4	(4)	**THE HOBBIT** Melbourne House
5	(3)	**HULK** Adventure International
6	(2)	**LORDS OF TIME** Level 9 Computing
7	(—)	**DUNGEON ADVENTURE** Level 9 Computing
8	(—)	**WAYDOR** I.M.S.
9	(11)	**VELNOR'S LAIR** Quicksilva
10	(18)	**INVINCIBLE ISLAND** Shepherd
11	(8)	**URBAN UPSTART** Shepherd
12	(16)	**ESPIONAGE ISLAND** Artic
13	(7)	**QUEST FOR THE HOLY GRAIL** Dream
14	(21)	**GOLDEN APPLE** Artic
15	(25)	**ORACLE'S CAVE** Dorcas
16	(12)	**VALHALLA** Legend
17	(27)	**PLANET OF DEATH** Artic
18	(22)	**SHIP OF DOOM** Artic
19	(19)	**MOUNTAINS OF KET** Incentive
20	(9)	**DENIS THROUGH THE DRINKING GLASS** Applications
21	(28)	**INCA CURSE** Artic
22	(20)	**MAD MARTHA** Mikro-Gen
23	(26)	**MAD MARTHA II** Mikro-Gen
24	(20)	**TRANSYLVANIAN TOWER** Shepherd
25	(29)	**BLACK CRYSTAL** Mastervision
26	(23)	**QUEST** Hewson Consultants
27	(15)	**TEN LITTLE INDIANS** Channel 8
28	(—)	**MESSAGE FROM ANDROMEDA** Interceptor
29	(10)	**KNIGHTS QUEST** Phipps Associates
30	(—)	**GREEDY GULCH** Phipps Associates

Crash Competition



A CHANCE TO WIN A BRAND NEW GAME FROM CABLE SOFTWARE . . .

Cable Software have offered us 100 copies of their adventure game *Blade the Warrior*. This new game was reviewed by Derek Brewster in last month's Adventure Trail, where he said, *"At the first location you at once sense the rich atmosphere which pervades the whole game . . . which really impresses after a very little time . . . the game condenses around an immensely enjoyable plot; suspense builds and subsides as in a novel."*

Blade the Warrior is renowned for his prowess with weapons and his quest is to follow in the trail of Mazar who carries within him magic strong enough to defeat the Black Witch. Things don't, of course, work out as easily as that as Blade attempts to destroy the Witch and free the land of Sayell. Mazar disappeared many moons ago – will Blade's limited knowledge of magic be enough to supplement his strength with weapons?

Blade the Warrior is rated by Derek as an average-to-difficult text adventure and Cable are prepared to offer help sheets for those who get really stuck! It is the first game for the Spectrum from the Luton-based **Cable Software,** which began life in January 1983. Like so many other software companies of the time, it



BLADE THE WARRIOR COMPETITION

Cable Software are giving away 100 copies of *Blade The Warrior,* one each to the first 100 correct entries pulled from the bag, and all you have to do is answer the three questions below. Answers on a postcard please, or outside of a sealed envelope, to **BLADE COMPETITION, CRASH MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB,** to arrive no later than first post **November 22.**

1. A Blade is the sharp cutting edge of a weapon. Write down four blade weapons like, for instance **sword** (which doesn't count)!
2. Look closely at the word **BLADE** and see how many other words you can make using the five letters. You must write down at least 8 words to score and the words must be of three or more letters each. (We found 14, but there may be even more)!
3. In the review of *Blade the Warrior,* Derek Brewster says that at one point a **TROGLODYTE** stares at you. What is a troglodyte? Is it . . .
   a) a fire-breathing beast?
   b) a monster of living stone?
   c) a person who lives in a cave?

began by selling its products on mail order. After achieving some success in the Dragon 32 market, with games reaching a number 1, 2 and 4 spot in the national charts, the company decided that the only way forward was to move onto the Spectrum and Commodore machines. We can now look forward to more Cable adventures and games, as they move even further forward.

FEW SUBJECTS in this business have aroused as much controversy as that of illegal software copying, or tape piracy as it is more popularly known. Software houses actively engaged in trying to stamp it out would prefer it to be known as **software theft**, believing that the word 'piracy' has romantic overtones making tape thieves feel more like Robin Hoods. Various estimates have been made as to the financial loss to the industry caused by commercial and home copying – some as high as £100m a year.

The response to our questionnaire in issue 8 (September) has been surprisingly high considering that we were asking people to display their dishonesty in public as it were! The results are interesting, perhaps even alarming, and will certainly serve to reinforce everyone's prejudices depending on which side of the fence you happen to sit.

Before we dive into the results, here are two letters which we feel neatly state the two most popular views held on the subject. The first is from **Shahid Ahmad**, a programmer who writes games for **Software Projects**. It is a letter in savage response to that from **Paul Watts** (which appeared in the CRASH forum September issue) who accused software houses of ripping people of with their prices. The second letter came attached to one of the questionnaire forms and is, naturally anonymous. It states, somewhat more sensibly than Paul Watts managed, the opposite side of Shahid's argument.

Dear Sir,

*Despite my initial anger, please read this letter thoroughly! Let me say first of all that, frankly, Paul Watts is so full of ****, he doesn't know the first thing about the piracy situation, and I would love to castrate him personally. Now that I have lett off some steam, I shall justify my cynical attack on this scum.*

Let me get straight first of all. I am a games designer and programmer working for Software Projects Ltd., and I have a couple of very good games under my belt, the most notable being the CBM64 version of Jet Set Willy.

Large software houses are not faceless organisations with money to burn, and they are not in the business for exploitation purposes. Yes, Software Projects are in the software field for the purpose of making money, but in the end, it is **you**, *the consumer, who decides upon how successful we become. If a game is of poor quality then a magazine such as yourselves will slag the program off, inevitably creating a loss of sales for that piece of software. In the end, no one is pointing a gun at people's heads saying, 'buy my software or face the consequences.' THE CONSUMER PAYS HIS MONEY AND MAKES HIS CHOICE.*

Now let me refer to Mr. Watts letter where he quite stupidly says, 'The pirates take some of this profit away, but the only reason they can do this is because the consumer DOES NOT WISH TO PAY THE HIGH PRICES ASKED FOR GAMES.'

I mean, for God's sake man, you are saying that the consumer is a common thief! Everything is expensive these days, but Mr. Watts, are you saying that you would go into a grocers and take the food that you need to eat, simply because the cost of living is so high? Would you steal because of this sick excuse of yours?

The case is simple. Software is expensive because of a variety of reasons. This expense does not give you the right to steal someone's program.

I'm not a millionaire programmer. This statement is a myth. Eugene Evans would have been lucky, very lucky to earn £5,000 a year for his crummy games let alone the ludicrous quoted figure of £35,000. So if you steal a program, Mr. Watts, you are not robbing a faceless corporation – you are robbing ME. I do not make a fortune out of writing games – yes, the rewards are potentially enormous (my good friend Matthew Smith will testify to that!), but there is little room for success with such a fiercly competitive market.

Now, getting back to the manufacturing costs. Software Projects do not get £5.95 for each copy of **Jet Set Willy** *sold. The retailer gets a massive 50% of this (sometimes more). This leaves SP with a paltry £2.98. Out of this figure goes 15% VAT leaving £2.53. Then goes my potential royalty of, let's say, 35p which leaves £2.18. Now deduct the price of getting the cassette duplicated and having a 4-colour inlay made. This takes a further 60p chunk out of that figure, leaving£1.58. Now deduct the massive cost of an advertising campaign, rent, electricity, food, staff wages (which are not abnormally large, may I say), phone bills, rates, expenses, piracy, overheads etc. etc. etc.*

It takes a lot of money to produce a cassette and keep a company running, and in the end SP make about as much profit on a tape as I do. Do you get the message Watts?

I have made a few points, all significant, and if I sound angry, it is because Paul Watts is simply out of his league. He is a complete amateur when it comes to this subject and he doesn't know the first thing about software piracy or theft. Finally, I'd like to state that all these views and comments are from my point of view only, and do not necessarily represent the views of Software Projects Ltd.

I challenge Mr. Watts publicly to defend himself, but frankly, I think he may as well surrender now, as I have used barely any of my ammunition.

Yours faithfully, Shahid Ahmad, London NW1

Sir,

In the spirit of anonymity with which you questionnarie was framed I have decided to enclose this letter.

The law of copyright suffers from one defect: it is not against the moral code. Criminal law can divide its offences into two groups the moral and administrative. Moral laws are those against theft, violence etc., but, contrary to what might be thought, they are not obeyed because we respect the law but because they are morally wrong.

Consequently few people actually commit such offences. If they did the police could not cope. Administrative laws are those that help regulate the socio-economic structure of society or lead to it running smoothly. In this country it is illegal to drive on the right of the road. In France the opposite is illegal. This is not to say that either one or the other is wrong. They are in fact both right as their purpose is to ensure conformity, to make traffic run smoothly. In fact it does not matter which side of the road we drive on as long as it is the same. Copyright merely enforces conformity to a capatalist economy, in effect ensuring profits temporarily. Thus the software houses are foolish if they think that stiffer penalties are going to stop piracy. The public sector has long experience of enforcing administrative law. Since there is no moral compunction to obey two methods have been devised: one(make detection easier thereby increase the deterrant aspect of sentencing (e.g. breathalysers, spot checks etc.); and two) make the offence more difficult to commit (e.g. put bumps in the road to enforce speed limits). Therefore, software houses must develop effective anti-piracy devices such as encryption, dongles etc. and ensure detection through paying informants and the use of spies. If the latter strategy is to be effective then the methods of enforcement must be used against the home copier. The problem is that there would be a public outcry and this is a part of the law that record companies have always shrunk from enforcing. So realistically the only things that the software companies can do is use more sophisticated protection and attack the commercial pirates.

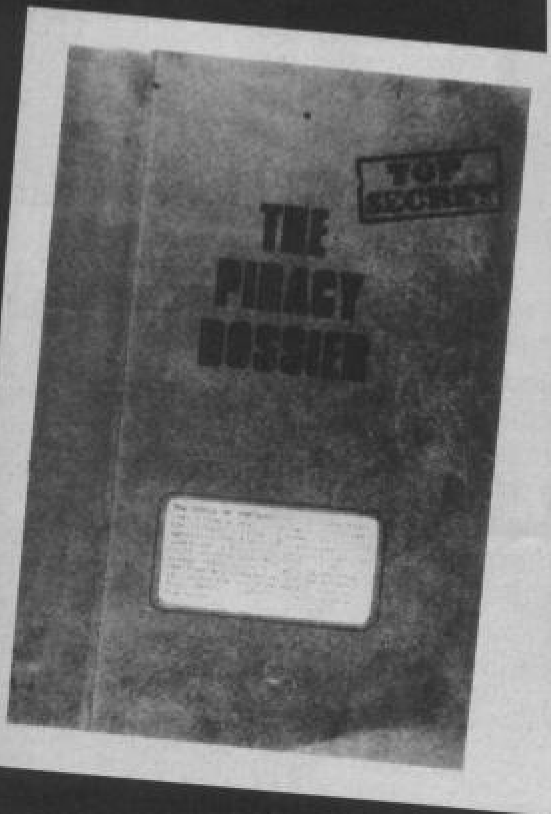
In favour of the software houses I would say that they have a bigger problem than the recording companies in that a copy (especially because of tape-copiers) is as good if not superior than the original and indeed can even be improved by copying to another media such as microdrive. Records, however, lose quality and, therefore, if I really want a record I will buy it rather than put up with an inferior taped copy. However, unlike a record, I must buy software sight unseen or go by reviewers comments.

This comparison with records also holds the key to another issue: the volume of piracy. The software houses produce figures such as '£100m a year lost through taping', but is this true? As a professional compiler of statistics I think I have the right to question the soundness of such information. In my questionnaire I have indicated that about half the value of my collection is in pirates. I know that most of my friends have a greater proportion. The software houses presumably use the logic 'take last year's sales and multiply by X'. This is not good enough, however. Out of my entire software library there are actually few programs I use. I would put the figure at about seven out of one hundred and ten, of the seven two are pirates. I have recently become much more selective in buying or copying programs. My rule is that if the program is one I'm not going to use I do not bother. Most of my copying is in point of fact little more than stamp collecting. If my only option was to buy a program I would probably buy very few more than now. I would probably swap much more. At the end of the day copying only reduces profits if it

prevents sales. Commercial piracy operations undoubtedly do this. I doubt thought that home taping does. If I could not copy from friends I would simply borrow. If a program was really good I would buy it (but this would be very rare). Also remember that a record can be played on any machine a program can only be run on one micro.

To conclude let me say that I believe commercial piracy to be wrong because it is done for gain and that it does present a problem to software houses. I doubt very much, though, that home copying does.

THE HACKER'S APPRENTICE



THE RESULTS

The following statistics have been collated from 300 questionnaire forms returned at the time of writing. More forms are still arriving at this time, but the significant percentages probably wouldn't be affected very much.

1. Do you think home copying is harmful to the software business?
   YES **52%**
   NO **39.84%**
   DON'T KNOW **8.2%**

2. Is there a difference between home copying and commercial piracy?
   YES **94.9%**
   NO **3.14%**
   DON'T KNOW **1.96%**

3. If 'yes' to the above, do you think commercial piracy is more or less harmful than home copying
   MORE **92.28%**
   LESS **4.47%**
   ABOUT THE SAME **3.25%**

4. Do you make copies because...
   A) originals are beyond your resources – **46.44%**
   B) you resent paying the full price – **37.08%**
   C) you just enjoy making copies – **9.74%**
   A & B) **6.784%**

5. Do you actually make illegal copies...
   A LOT **48.25%**
   OCCASIONALLY **46.30%**
   NEVER **5.45%**

6. How many originals do you own and how many illegal copies?
   ORIGINALS **4,195**
   ILLEGAL COPIES **16,725**

7. Do you produce copies...
   A) strictly for you own use – **58.8%**
   B) to give to friends – **35.56%**
   C) to sell to others – **5.63%**

8a. If you make copies, how many would you usually make from one original?
   67.62% said 1 copy
   15.57% said 2 copies
   6.15% said 3 copies
   2.87% said 4 copies
   5.33% said 5 copies
   2.46% said 6 copies or more

8b. How do you produce your copies?
   A) Tape to tape – **27.69%**
   B) Tape copier – **31.6%**
   C) Break and resave – **8.47**
   A & B) 23.13%
   A & C) **9.12%**

What is the total value of you collection (including illegal copies)?
Total collated value – **£121,194**

10. And what portion of the value is in illegal copies?
    Total collated value – **96,436**

11. Where do you get your copies from?
    A) Home – **16.86%**
    B) school – **30%**
    C) computer club – **6.29%**
    D) friend's house – **45.43%**
    E) office/lending library – **1.14%**

12. Would you still copy games if they were much cheaper?
    YES **41.87%**
    NO **45.12%**
    POSSIBLY **13%**

ANALYSIS

It's interesting to note that slightly over half believe that home copying is harmful to the software business in general (Q1), and yet a substantial 45% would still copy games even if they were cheaper. A significant number of returned forms added a note to this question along the lines that the more protection given a game, the harder they would try to break in and copy it! These two statistics taken together with the figure (still very high) who obviously believe that home copying is not harmful, reflects the widely held belief that even if no one copied games illegally, the sales figures would not rise substantially. In other words, people are already buying as much software as they are ever likely to. It's a moot point.

Commercial pirates (Q2) are seen as overwhelmingly harmful. Revolving around this thorny problem is the evident fact that whereas home copying is seen in an 'innocent' light (only 5.6% actually sell any copies) commercial pirates are in the illegal business for financial gain at others' expense. A rather odd sense of honour perhaps?

The age old argument of software cost is central to many of the questions asked and a huge 90% (Q4) said that software is either beyond their resources or that they resent paying the full price. Almost everyone admitted to making copies although well over half do for their own use only. The much maligned computer club only accounts for a surprisingly small percentage of obtained copies – schools, however, are the worst offending institution.

Perhaps the most alarming statistics are those for the value of collections. The 300 collated forms came to represent a staggering total of over £121,000 market value with over £96,000 of it being in illegal copies. The nirst figure checks out well against the total number of units claimed by the respondents – 20,920 multiplied by an average price of £6 equals £125,520 value. Looking at both sets of figures it is easy to see that only one quarter of copies owned are shop bought ones. If we extrapolate the figures of our 300 collated forms 30,000 people (a hit game may expect to sell this many originals) it would reflect a total owned value of £12 million, £9½ of which would be illegal! The averages show an ownership level of 14 originals and 55 illegals per person.

An important thing to bear in mind is that the 300 collated forms only represent a small fraction of the CRASH readership and it would be a mistake to assume that all our readers, indeed all Spectrum owners, are illegally copying games at the rates suggested by these results. A natural innaccuracy is apparent in the fact that the questionnaire prompted copiers to reply, and significantly NO forms were returned by readers saying that they did not ever make copies. There must be many such!

Crash Competition

WIN A GAME FROM ATLANT

Your chance to win any one of seven super games!

Last month we reviewed the three new games from budget software house **Atlantis** – *Vagan Attack*, *Eights* and *Master Mariner*. *Since then Atlantis have released four more – Mrs. Mopp, Sinbad, Pioneer* and *Mafia Contract*, mostly reviewed in this issue. The CRASH review team have been impressed by the quality of these games, all of which represent excellent value for their price, and show that budget software can be written to the quality of far higher priced games. Indeed *Mrs. Mopp* is not a newcomer, having originally been marketed by Computasolve at almost £5 more in its day. *Mrs. Mopp* received a good review from CRASH then, and now represents much more value of course.

Vagan Attack is a 'Star Trek' type of game, with marvellous status graphics. *Eights* is an unusually absorbing and well presented card game. *Master Mariner* offers the player the chance to make a fortune on the high seas with a trading brig. *Pioneer* is a 'Scramble' type game with a wide range of definable options, while *Sinbad* throws you into a 3D maze adventure. *Mafia Contract* is an adventure (and at the time of writing we are not sure whether Derek Brewster has reviewed it in time for this issue) which stars you as a hitman for Don Capolla caught in the midst of a bloody gang war.

Atlantis Software Ltd. was first set up in january 1984 by **Michael Cole** and **Rodger Coghill** who first met through the video industry: Mike had been managing director of one of the largest UK Software distributors, and Rodger runs **Atlantis Video Productions Ltd.**, a similar but smaller firm in Wapping. (There's a tentative historical link here, since CRASH artist Oliver Frey has at one time designed video cassette box covers for Atlantis Video).

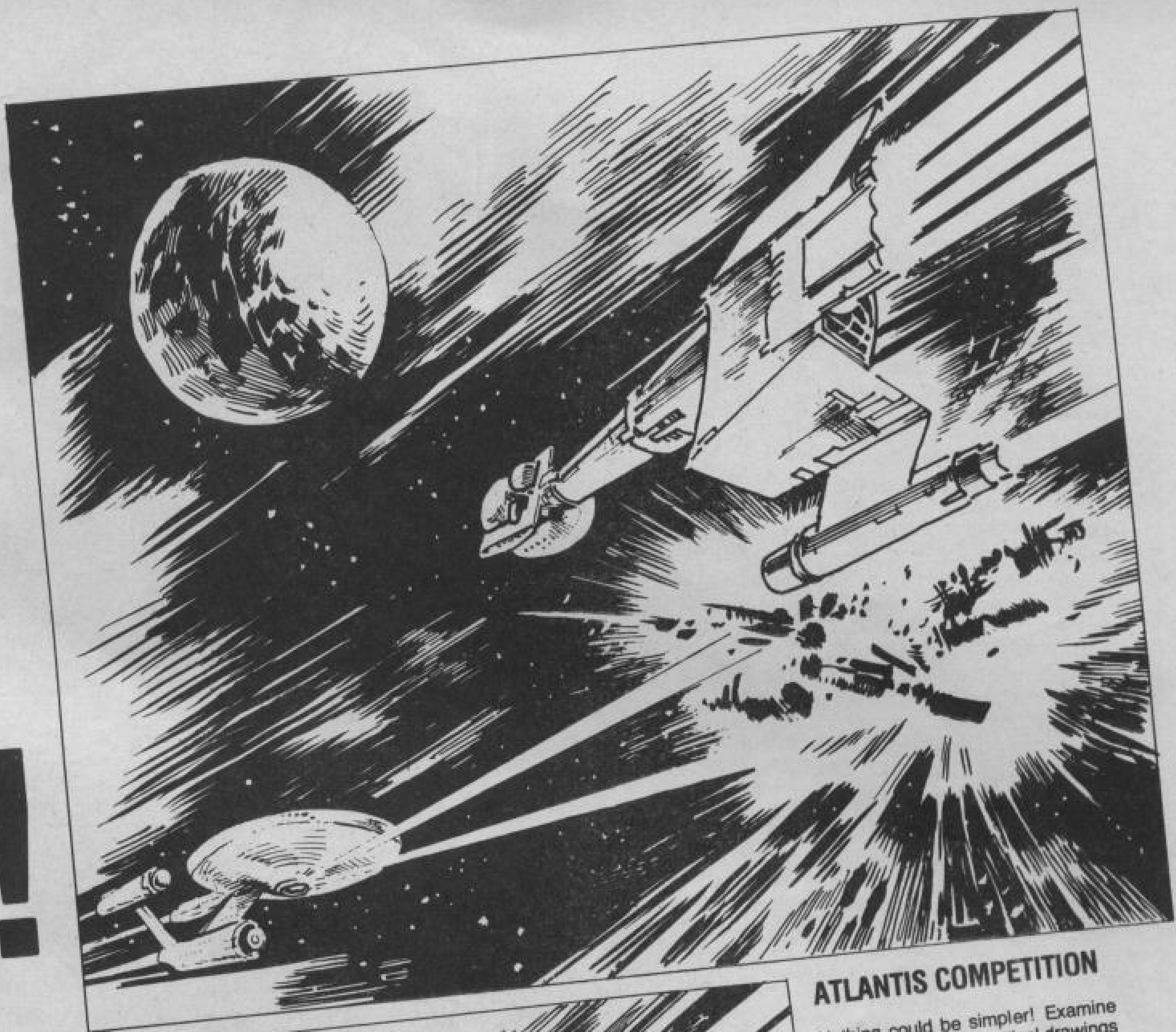
Together Mike and Rodger calculated that computer games software offered considerable growth potential, but that with four million personal computers likely to be in households by end-1984, average sales volume per game seemed far too low. Half the users were under sixteen, so pocket-money price was their obvious key to higher volumes.

For five months Mike evaluated hundreds of games at ASL's Islington premises, and finally selected just four for release in may. For packaging they chose one of Britain's top creative designers. With a retail price of only £1.99, Atlantis is clearly aiming at volume, and at that price the perils of piracy are much diminished they believe. The firm's philosophy is to keep overheads low and control stocks tightly: they now have sixteen games on the market and will have twenty out by Christmas. In addition to the current seven releases for the Spectrum, a few more will be added before the end of the year.

It was only natural that their low price would bring with it question marks about the games' quality, but as the reviews appear it is becoming clear that the suspicions are unfounded. 'We were amazed at the high standard of some of the games sent to us for evaluation,' says Cole. There must be quite a few potentially wealthy teenage games writers out there – particularly since the market is open for world-wide sales.

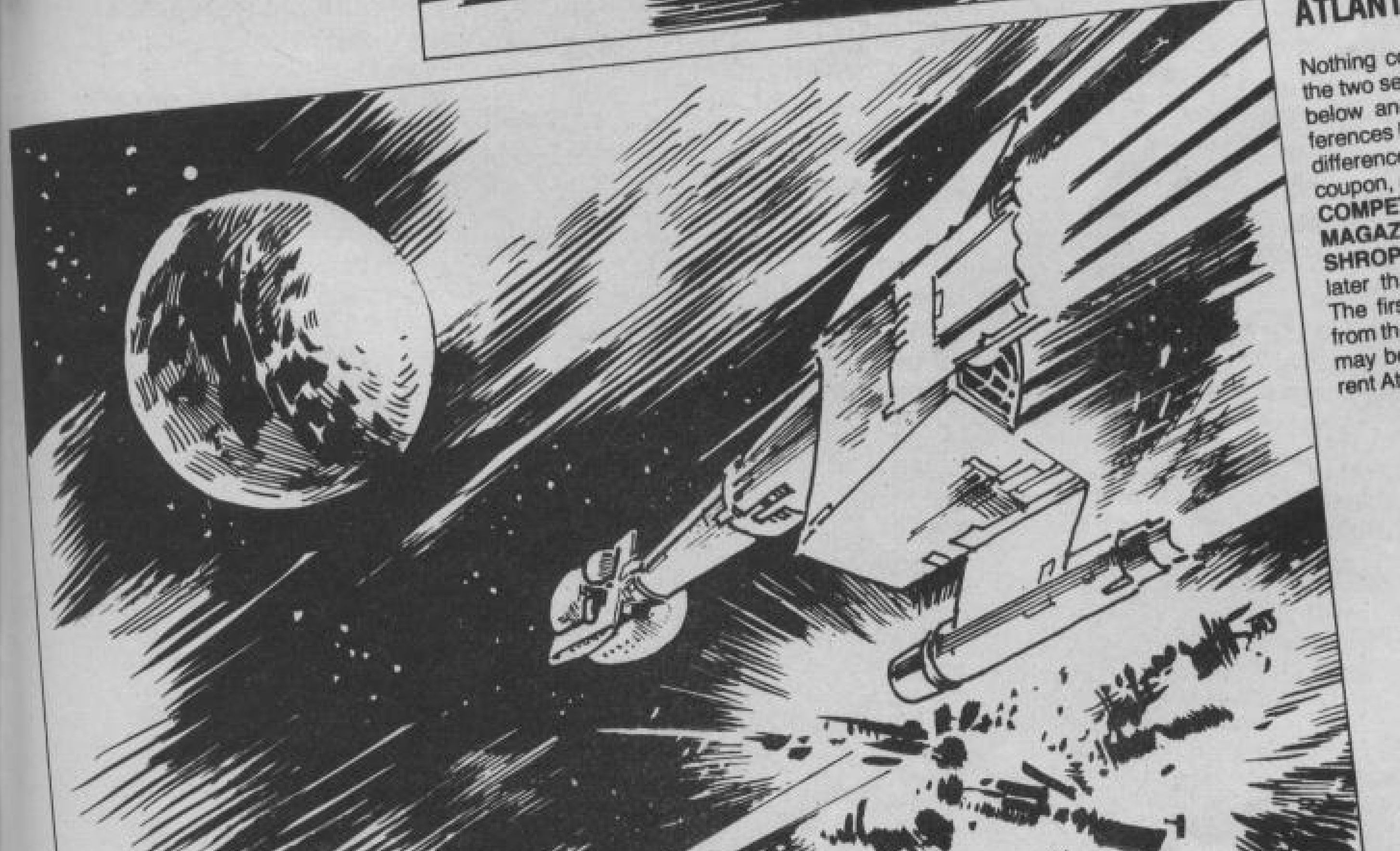
TIS!

A



ATLANTIS COMPETITION

Nothing could be simpler! Examine the two seemingly identical drawings below and pick out the twelve differences between them. Circle all the differences on drawing B, fill out the coupon, and send it in to: **ATLANTIS COMPETITION, CRASH MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB,** to arrive no later than first post **November 22.** The first 100 correct entries picked from the bag will win one game which may be chosen from the seven current Atlantis releases.



B

☐ Vagan Attack
☐ Eights
☐ Master Mariner
☐ Mrs. Mopp
☐ Sinbad
☐ Pioneer
☐ Mafia Contract

Name ....

Address ....

....

Postcode ....

Please tick the game of your choice should you be one of the lucky winners.

FRNT

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT AT THE FRONT
ANGUS RYALL

Allo mes petits sossisons! I was much disappointed by the lack of libel suits, threats against life and limb, etc. resulting from the last FRONTLINE, so this issue I'm going to be tightening up and telling the *real* truth about some more strategy turkeys. Actually, I must tell you that CRASH has been told that its review of a certain game, should have been upgraded and we have risked losing the advertising from the company that produces it (money we get from advertising pays a large proportion of running costs, so it keeps the cover price down). I'd just like to point out to these cowboys that this kind of petty blackmail produces, if anything, an even more negative approach from writers. It's about time some of these people realised that a reviewer is paid to write what he or she feels about a game, and not what the game producer feels about it. For the record, as I didn't write the review, I've reviewed this particular game again and found myself in total agreement with the previous reviewers. You'll have to guess which one it is, but I expect that even those of you with really short memories will get it.

And while I'm having a gripe, I spent a knackering couple of days at the PCW show recently, and were there any decent strategy games there? In a word, no. Good old Lothlorien were there, of course, and there was one other excellent strategy game which I can't tell you anything about (ahh, conflict of interest. . .) but I was very rapidly reduced to discussing the moribund state of the industry with a nubile young cocktailperson in leopardskin shorts. Actually, I can't stand exhibitions you know, but when duty calls. . .

EMPIRES

Producer: **Imperial Software**

A very quick one this. The copy I received to review would not load. I mean, none of it would – the game comes with three 'player cassettes', on 'umpires cassette', and in my case, as a reviewer, a special 'reviewers cassette' containing excerpts from the 25th round of play (!). Apparently you can extend the game to a six-player one (at a price), but for all that, this seems to be very much a pass-the-note-to-the-referee-and-wait-for-the-reply type of game. The boards look nice, even if the rest of the packaging is dire (the instructions are printed in the kind of ink that renders the Daily Mail useless for anything except, um, eating your chips out of); but I think if I'd shelled out twenty quid for this lot I'd be a bit annoyed to find I couldn't load any of it. If I get a loadable copy I might have another go at this next month. Get it in gear, men.

WAR 70

Producer: **CCS**
Author: **Mark Wheeler**
Retail price: **£5.95**

I'm supposed to be nice to CCS because they've invited me to lunch at the Ritz – but in fact they didn't have to bribe me, because I actually like *War 70*. The great thing about it is that it takes in both the strategic and the tactical, by operating in two distinct phases – in the first, you regroup and move your armies, and in the second you fight battles with individual armies against each other. This is a two-player game, which some people might call a bit of a drawback; unlike some other wargames it is difficult to play on your own as a purely military exercise. Once you're playing with someone else, though, it becomes quite a teaser. The game starts off with the 'Campaign Map Scenario'. This is a map of two countries, showing their capital cities, eight other cities, and the roads that connect them. Each side has nine armies/groups, and there are 32 locations on the map where the armies can be. Each player moves his armies around the map using a set number of moves, attempting to engage (or avoid) the enemy. Once the enemy is engaged, the game switches to its battle sequence. Each location has its own battlefield map, which shows trees, rivers and buildings; I moaned a lot last month about the poor standard of graphics in games like *Confrontation*, and the battlefield maps in *WAR 70* are certainly an improvement on that, although still pretty basic. The battle runs horizontally, and features a bizarre method of moving pieces – you have to type in the co-ordinates of the location you want the piece to move to. I found that after a hard night's reviewing, my eyes just couldn't handle this, and I had to keep checking the screen with a ruler! Apart from this obvious shackle, the battle moves fairly smoothly; each army (at full strength) has eight units, of four different types. Each unit has a certain number of men in it, and the number of men killed determines when a unit goes 'out of action' (they're effectively strength points). The game benefits from having a concrete objective – the control of your opponent's capital city – and is almost as good as Red Shift's stuff! It was apparently runner-up to *Battle 1917* in 1983s 'Cambridge Awards' (that's the bash I've got to go to at the Ritz) but deserved to win hands down (CCS must be laughing all the way to the bank).

Verdict: clear layout, and a nice mix of overall strategy and close tactics. A pussycat.

BATTLE 1917

Producer: **CCS**
Retail price: **£5.95**
Author: **Mark Lucas**

Well what do you know. . .
Right from the start of *Battle 1917* you know you're dealing with a toy. When you ask for instructions, it gets all funny-ha-ha with the tank symbols and suchlike. It makes whoopee cushion noises at you. In short, this program treats the user like a favoured, but moronic, grandchild (this does not bode well for the Cambridge Awards jury. Who are they? Are they utterly bold?) The game itself is just a straight battle between two players; each player starts off with a King and 28 units of various types. The problem is that the units are grouped together in fours, and orders can only be given to the group as a whole. This means that as the group gets broken up (as you move diagonally, for example, some units may pass the corner of a lake while others get stuck behind it) you can end up moving three units in the wrong direction just to get a fourth one out from behind a tree. Cannon, the nly units that can fire, must all fire in the same direction and for the same range. Whilst the game is very fast-moving, a little more thought and time could have produced something with individual *or* group movement, which would have been miles better. One excellent feature of the game is the directional compass on the map, which gives the key for the direction you need. The graphics are clear, but are pretty juvenile.

Verdict: a toy. Nice for eight-year-olds.

CONQUEST

Producer: **Cheetahsoft**
Retail price: **£6.95**
Author: **Douglas Nightingale**

I remember a few months ago, when Cheetahsoft's first

T LINE

advertising started coming through, I thought 'well I never – a bit of professionalism at last." Just how wrong can you be? Their ads ranked with Imagine's as some of the best in the industry; but their games have more in common with Mastertronic or even (gulp) the dreaded Activision. The only decent thing about *Conquest* is the map, but these days any idiot with *Melbourne Draw* could do it. . . this is a game which, in all its salient features, appeared in at least one computer magazine about a year ago. Fair enough, as a mag prog its quite a decent little game. But to tart up the map a bit and try and flog it for seven pounds is a bit strong. The game is a very simple form of empire building, where you gain one new legion for each five squares of territory you conquer, the object being to rule 100 squares. At the end of each go, your flanks are assailed by barbarians, plague and other empires. Plague is the worst – because it takes about two minutes between each of your goes to run its couse and decimate your empire. In this time you will have picked the fluff out of your belly button, scratched your bum, done sundry other despicable things, and generally wished you were doing anything else but playing *Conquest*.

Verdict: go forth and watch TV.

CONFLICT

Producer: **Martech Games**
Author: D.E. Martin

I'm not entirely sure if there's a lot of point in reviewing this, since it's over two years old now and almost certainly unobtainable. However, it's worth mentioning because, despite its age, its one of the only reasonable efforts that's been made to produce an integrated board/computer game. In *Conflict* you have to raise cash by trading in various commodities; with the money, you purchase and maintain armies which you use to further your megalomaniac ambitions. Basically, the trading is done on the screen and the battling on the board; having the board makes battle strategy probably more sophisticated than it otherwise would be, but it's very difficult to judge, as the game's age means that the programming looks as though it was done by an aardvark. There's another game by Martech, of similar vintage, called *Galaxy Conflict*, which looks to be slightly better; but again, the age of the game really precludes comparison with current software. I think, though, that if I were Mr. Martin, I would pend some time on updating these two games, because they both contain the germs of good ideas – but I don't think anyone will even look at them in their present, dated state.

Verdict: where were you in '82?

Finally, I hope that as Christmas approaches, I might actually have some *new* games to write about – a little birdie at BEYOND tells me that just as *Lords of Midnight* worked better as a strategy game than a quest, so will *Doomdark's Revenge* (just staking my claim to a review copy, chaps) – with luck it'll be just one of many strategy masterpieces.

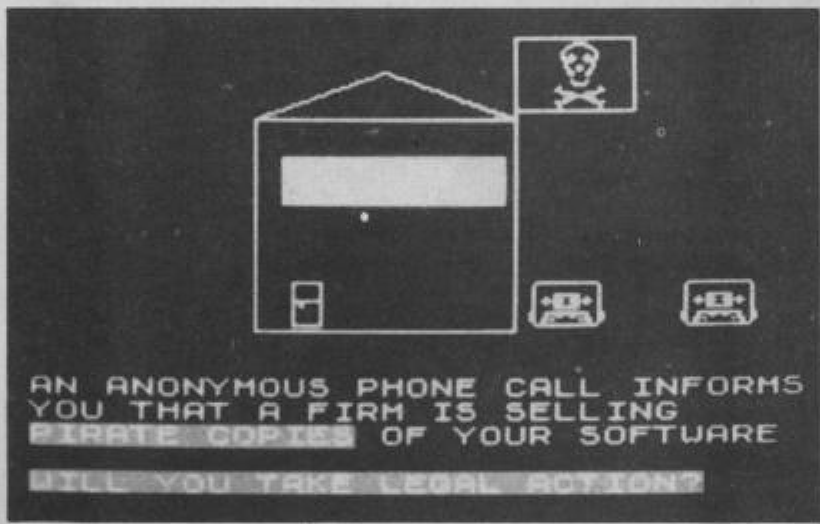


NEWS INPUT

40

JUST IMAGINE . . .

R and R have a new game coming out soon written by DAVID LESTER (one of the CRASH reporting team). It is a sort of strategical simulation based on real life. JUST IMAGINE requires the player to run a giant software company (Imagine that . . .) – well, how giant you become is up to the player. But David, who is well placed to know the ins and outs of the software business, says the game provides a very real model where decisions must be taken about selecting the right product, marketing and promotion campaigns, getting PR into magazines and good reviews for the games (I'm told CRASH gets a look in), as well as the day to day problems. *R and R* say that JUST IMAGINE. . . is rather different from Incentive's *Millionaire*, which was on a similar theme. The object is to make a million but that's not all – the object is also to keep in the charts, keep the million and stay in business. The model has been aimed to be very realisitic and takes account of piracy as well. Because the market trends change so rapidly **R and R** will be releasing update programs to change the basic model thus keeping the game fresh and topical. David would like to include predictive elements in these updates such as the effects of budget software on the market. Most importantly, however, the game is intended to be very funny and it includes static and moving graphics, not usually the strong point of such games. More news as soon as we get it.



MINDER TRONICS

DK 'Tronics have been a bit quiet on the software front recently, but they have announced the signing of a deal with Thames Television to develop games based on their highly successful TV programmes **Minder, The Sweeney** and **Benny Hill.**

DK'Tronics in a tersely worded press release (which includes a word firmly banned from the pages of CRASH), have announced exclusive contracts with King Features Syndicate of America to release *Popeye* for several machines including the Spectrum. **David Heelas,** the softly spoken DK'Tronics managing director said, 'There is far too much bull**** in an industry especially about software. Every trade magazine I pick up is full of features on software companies attempting to hype their particular game. We at DK prefer to take a more professional approach with far less razzmatazz normally associated with the Software industry.'

1984 CAMBRIDGE AWARDS

JOHN SHERRY of Keele, Staffordshire, is the winner of the 1984 Cambridge awards co-sponsored by C.C.S. and Sinclair User, and he receives the £2000 prize and award trophy. The winning program, **The Prince**, is described as a highly original, tactical and interactive adventure game for four players. Published by C.C.S. it will cost £7.95.

The four runners-up are **1942 Mission**, an adventure by **Thomas Frost**; **Insurgency**, a war game by **Nicholas Holgate**; **Blue Riband**, a seafaring navigational simulation by **David Bark**; and finally **War Zone**, a war game by **Steven Thomas.** All four will be published by C.C.S at £5.95.

N·E·W· I·N·P·U·T·



SKOOL'S OUT FOREVER!

GREAT NEWS for *Wheelie* fans! Microsphere, the software house that brought you the *Train Game* and the long running hit game *Wheelie*, have announced the release of their next epic. Called *Skool Daze*, it is a hilarious (and very difficult) school romp. The hero is Eric (although the game allows you to use any name both for yourself and all the cast of thousands), and he knows that inside the staffroom safe are kept the Reports. And being Eric, he knows he must at all costs remove his report before it is read and signed by the Headmaster! It is here, that the content of the game really gets going.

To find out the combination of the safe, he must hit all the school shields hanging around the walls. Only they are not all easy to get at by jumping up. In some case he might have to use his catapult to clobber a master and then use the dazed victim's head to bounce a second shot off it to hit the shield. There are other equally horrendous ways of achieving this simple task! Once all the shields have been hit, Eric must get the code from the masters, each of which has been entrusted with one letter (except the History Master who, because of his great age, has had his letter implanted in his brain by hypnotism (there's a very plausible method of causing recall however!) the masters will only reveal the secret once they have been knocked over. Having got all the code letters the only place to try the out is on the blackboard. If Eric succeeds in opening the safe he knows he will be safe for another school year. But before the task is complete he must cover up his tracks by hitting all the shields again to stop them flashing.

Skool Daze is played out in a highly complex area over which the camera scrolls, revealing school rooms, staircases, corridors and milling pupils and masters. There is the school bully, who has a nasty habit of bopping Eric in the eye, there are the masters with their endless questions and complaints, handling out lines as punishment. If you get too many lines the headmaster will chase after you. Unfortunately the pre-production copy we have arrived just too late for a full review in this issue, but two of the reviewing team have had half an hour each with the game and have pronounced themselves as very excited by it. The graphics are especially strong, with masses of detail and animation, the game appears very challenging and certainly has tons of content. Watch out next month for the full review and colour pictures. For now you'll have to make do with black and white ones, but they do capture some of the flavour of this highly original game, which looks set to become another monster hit for Microsphere. Look out for the school graffiti artist who writes 'SKYRANGER IS GREAT' on the blackboards – *Sky Ranger* is the next Microsphere program. More news soon.



Eric and skool friends mill about the rooms, which resemble a large cutaway. The Cub monitor does not recognize the 'normal' mode of Spectrum graphics, and these pictures therefore lack the subtle shading that the game actually has, and certainly fail to show the masses of visual and game details that have been packed in.

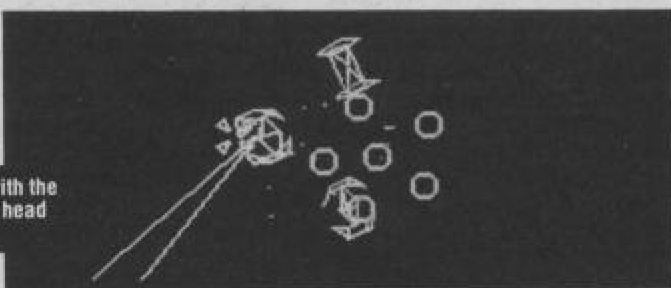


STARSTRIKE READY!

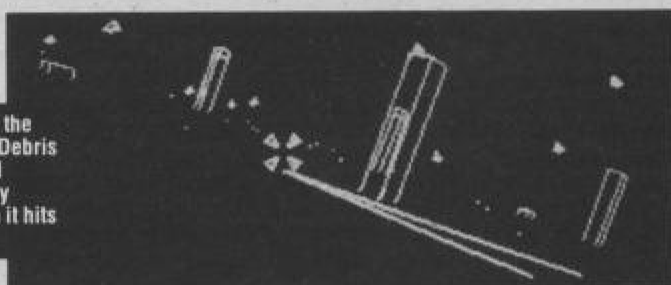
Last month in 'Keyboards' we mentioned **Realtime's** new 3D game which was titled *Starburst* in the news item. Within two days of showing us some unconnected sequences from the game, Realtime's **Andrew Onions** rang to say that they had decided to change the name to *Starstrike*. This only upset CRASH Editor Roger Kean who, when asked, had suggested the name *Starburst* – c'est la vie!

As you can see from the screen shots here, the latest stage of development makes *Starstrike* into a classic three-screen battle game. On the almost ready version these photographs were taken from, the only detail missing was the between-screen tacticals and the finale, although some modification of the alien ship firing power has still to be made (they outgun the player rather heavily at the moment)! We hope we'll be able to get a full review of *Starstrike* in next month's issue.

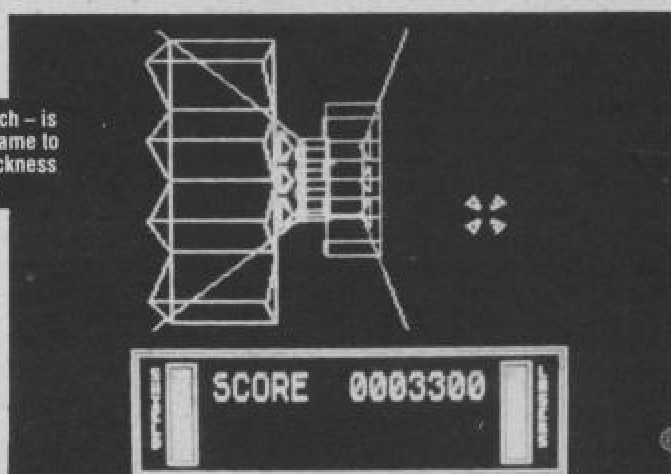
Out in space with the aliens coming head on.



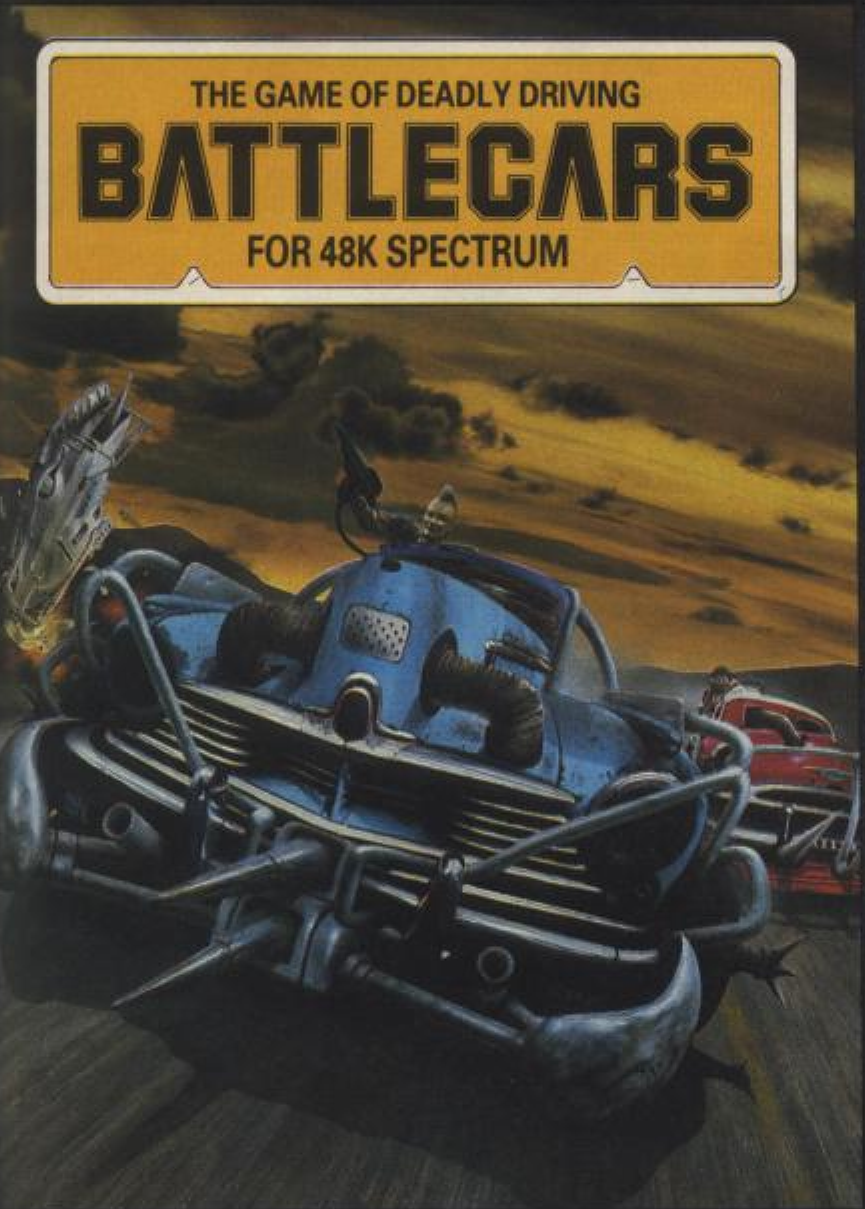
The surface of the battle planet. Debris from damaged towers actually bounces when it hits the ground.

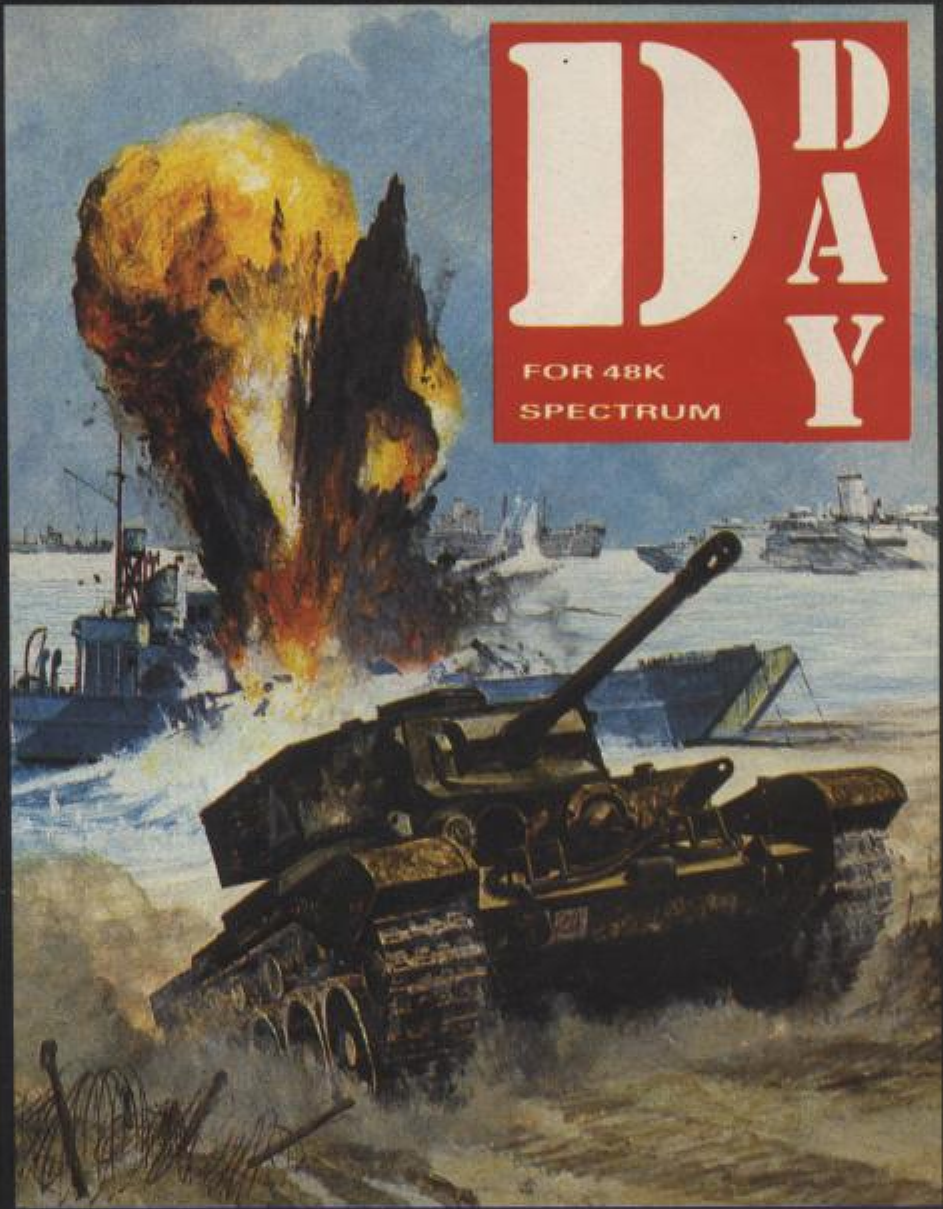


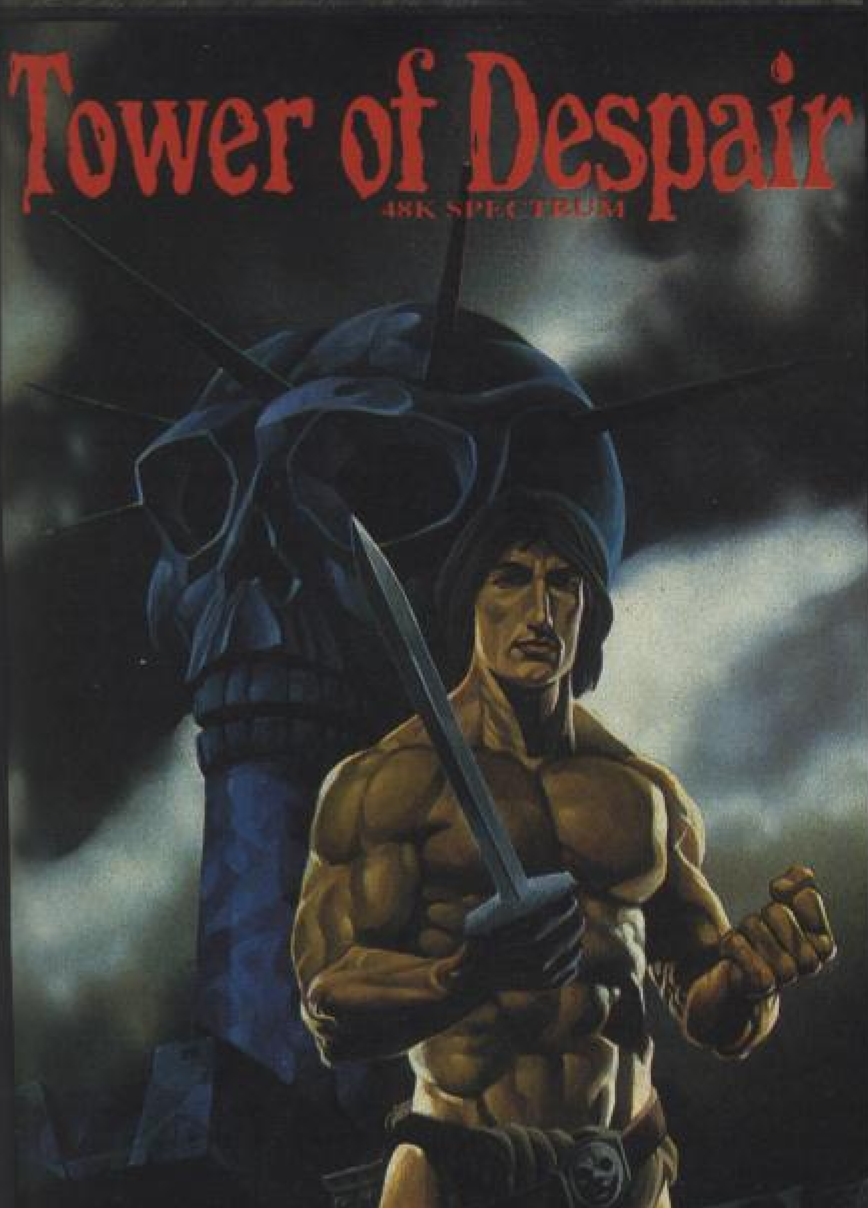
Down the trench – is this the first game to inspire sea sickness in the player?



The New Force in Software







GAMES WORKSHOP

GAMES WORKSHOP is the UK's largest fantasy and adventure games company, with ten years experience behind it. Now we're using our expertise to create the best in computer games, and the first three are BATTLECARS, D-DAY, and TOWER OF DESPAIR - each with over 90K of programming!

BATTLECARS is the deadly sport of the future...arm your battlecar with your chosen weapons, and select your battleground; a gruelling speed circuit or a town centre labyrinth. BATTLECARS is a one or two player game of skill, nerve and cunning.



D-DAY is a superb graphic wargame based on the Normandy landings of 1944. Two players take the Allied and German sides, battling through four seperate scenarios. D-DAY offers an enduring tactical challenge to players tired of simple arcade action.

In TOWER OF DESPAIR, Games Workshop has used its ten years of experience in role-playing games to create an outstanding adventure. It includes two entire 48K programs, and a guide containing a history, map, and illustrated clues.

FOR 48K SPECTRUM AND SHORTLY FOR THE COMMODORE 64

£7.95 EACH FROM ALL GOOD SHOPS OR DIRECT FROM:
MAIL ORDER DEPARTMENT, GAMES WORKSHOP LTD.,
27 - 29 SUNBEAM ROAD, LONDON NW10.



The Ultimate challenge from Slogger for Spectrum, Commodore and BBC owners
Contact Andrew Hilbig or Mark Holker on 0634 811634 or 41622

HUBERT

Producer: **Blaby Computer Games**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Chris Morrison**

The name *Hubert* disguises a familar game that in the arcade used a **'Q'** instead of a **'Hu'**. 31 squares arranged in alternating rows of four and five, must be changed in colour by jumping Hubert from one to another. On the first, easiest screen, Hubert is not pursued by anything, just to let you get the hang of the keys, which are user-definable. On the second screen a bubble begins darting about, killing Hubert off if both should land on the same square. On the third it's the same except Hubert must change the colours of the square twice. Jumping off the edge of the playing area results in instant death.

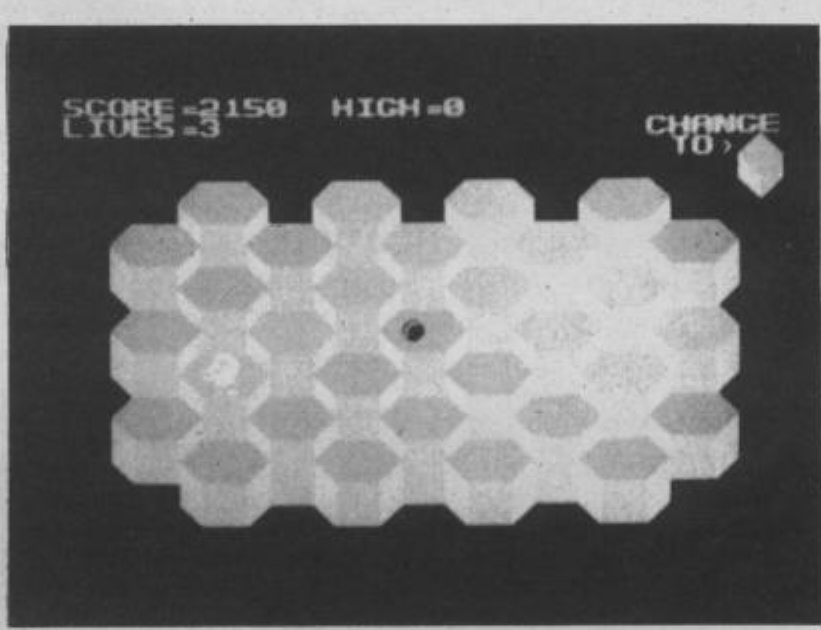
Subsequent screens add another nasty up to total of three, each addition alternating with single change and double change colours.

CRITICISM

● 'Another "Q-Bert" type game, not in the traditional pyramid layout style though, more rectangular 3D block. This could be said to make the game a bit more difficult since you can't get a real straight run. The playing area is drawn quite nicely, although the use of the several bright colours makes a little hard to see at times. Your man is not very detailed but moves quite nicely with a good squelching sound. Quite a good buy at £1.99.'

● *'The use of definable keys in a game like this is very good, since controls are in diagonals, and not everyone can cope with preset ones that are not of their own choosing. The coloured steps are not always instantly visible, but some thought has gone into making sure the monsters are, as they change from black to white to act as a contrast to the colour step they are on. This is as challenging a "Q-Bert" type game as I have seen, especially as there are no flying saucers, and for its price it is very good value.'*

● 'I thought the monsters are a bit too random in their darting movements which tends to lower the skills factor involved This little grumble apart, I would find it hard not to recommend this version since it offers good playability against any other. Okay, so you don't get marvellous floating graphics, but it plays a fast game effectively, and I like the option of redefinable keys on a cheap price game like this, which you wouldn't normally expect. And there's the nice touch, when you loose a life, of a balloon appearing at the top containing the letter **S** followed by various symbols which represents that word we'er not allowed to use in CRASH anymore.'



COMMENTS

Control keys: user-definable
Joystick: Kempston, but almost any via UDK
Keyboard play: responsive, although it seems the monsters have a move priority over you, which is disadvantageous at times
Use of colour: fairly good
Graphics: reasonable and fast
Sound: nice effects
Skill levels: 1 with progressive difficulty
Lives: 3
General rating: very good value for money, and an above average version of the game type.

Use of computer	70%
Graphics	60%
Playability	54%
Getting started	63%
Addictive qualities	54%
Value for money	67%
Overall	**62%**

ZOMBIE ZOMBIE

Producer: **Spaceman/Quicksilva**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£6.95**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Angela & Sandy White**

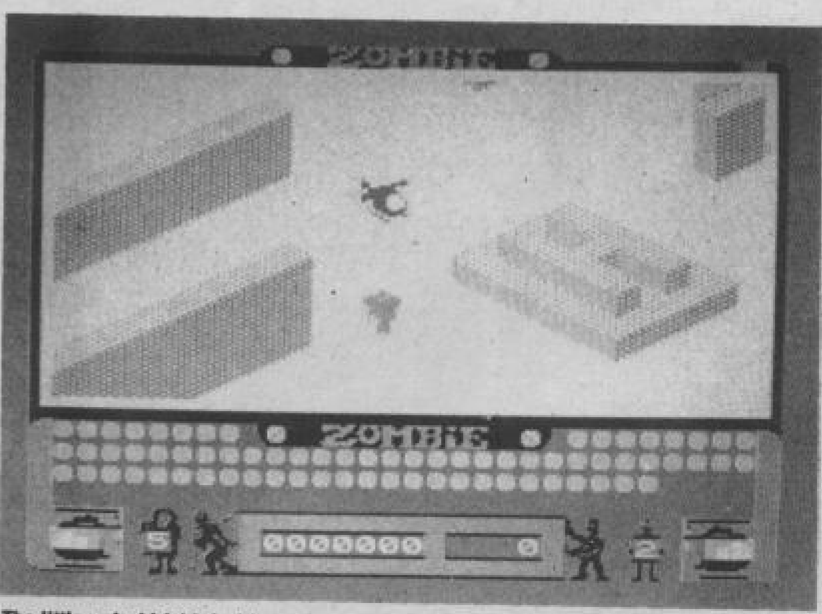
Yes folks, it's the long-awaited follow-up to Sandy White's extraordinary *3D Ant Attack.* The style is instantly recognisable, the pre-defined isometic perspective city maze and fast scrolling, the boy or girl hero leaping and walking around, but colour has been added and a few more gizmos to make a different game altogether. Our hero has now been provided with a little red helicopter to fly about in and the city has become infested with death-dealing zombies.

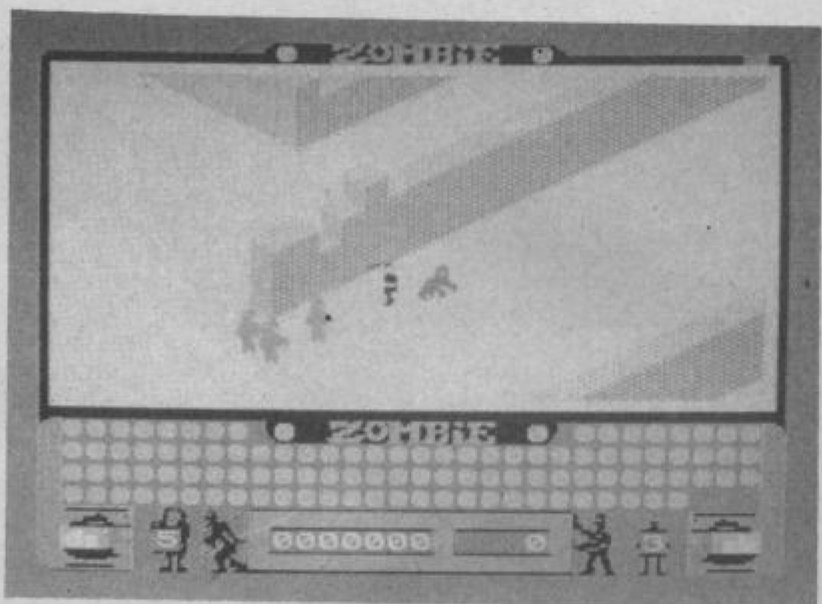
The helicopter allows another new element to creep in – architecture. For once inside it, the hero can drop blocks to build or re-design the city. He can also remove existing blocks by the same means. This becomes important because in *Zombie Zombie* the hero/ine can jump from the tallest blocks but only jump up single steps, and the Zombies can only be killed off by luring them into following you up onto the walls, and when you jump down from a high one, the zombie follows, splatting redly on the ground!



You are also provided with one other means of defence – you can blow a puff of air at the zombies which will blow them away for a moment. Below the playing area rows of yellow dots (106 in all) represent the carrying capacity of the helicopter in blocks. Every time a block is dropped a dot disappears. Once out of the machine and on foot, the dots represent breaths left, so after a long stint of building it pays to stock up on breaths before disembarking. To pick up blocks the helicopter must be sitting on a wall and the fire key is tapped. To drop one, it must be hovering in the air, which is also done with the fire key, but if the fire key is rapidly tapped, it will result in blocks falling down into position. Getting out of the helicopter is done by landing and using a direction key. Locating the 3D position of the helicopter is easy with its shadow being seen on the ground.

As in *Ant Attack* there is the facility of four camera angle





The little red whirlybird with an enormous capacity for bricks makes a novel appearance in ZOMBIE ZOMBIE.

views which are achieved by standing still and using the fire key, the views then rotate in turn automatically.

CRITICISM

● '*Ant Attack II*? This is very similar in style to the earlier game, both in layout and type. I feel that *Zombie Zombie* is better than *Ant Attack,* though control is still a bug bear. The ability to move blocks is great and I spent ages trying to block in a zombie, although killing them (how can you kill something that is already dead?) is done by leading them to their deaths over high walls. The 3D graphics are very impressive and the sound is excellent although there isn't much during play itself. *Zombie Zombie* is a good game which is more playable than *Ant Attack.*

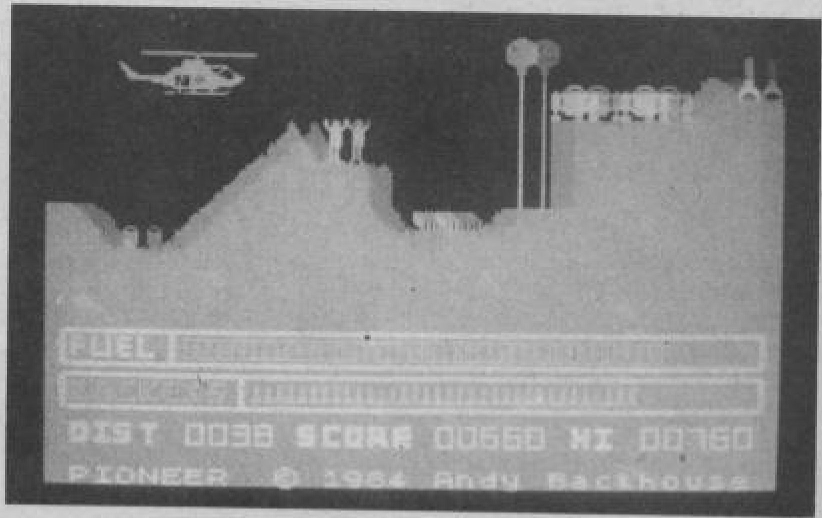
● '*Sandy White evidently took note of the complexity of controlling* Ant Attack, *because the keys for* Zombie Zombie *are much reduced, everything now being controllable from the joystick without rows and rows of other keys to worry about. This instantly makes the new game more fun to play as there is more time to enjoy it!* Zombie Zombie *is full of neat touches (like the copyright, written large in stone blocks) and I especially like the way that you can crash your helicopter into a wall – it vanishes, but you are all right. Later you will see that the helicopter has returned to its pad in the centre of the city – the spot marked by H. Introducing colour has made the game look livlier, but has unfortunately introduced some attribute problems along with it – these do not spoil the game however. Although I enjoyed playing* Zombie Zombie, *I don't think it is particularly addictive, and rather as with* Ant Attack, *I was left with an impression of super graphics making a lack of content. Still, building cities is great fun and the game is probably worth it for that alone.*'

● 'Essentially this is *3D Ant Attack,* except without ants and with zombies instead. Several differences become apparent straight away if you've ever played *Ant Attack;* they are that the maze is more colourful and other characters in the game have colour as well instead of being just black and white. Of course, this does create quite bad attribute problems, but doesn't spoil the playability of the game. The maze is considerably smaller than its 'parent' but is much more flexsible and you can enthusiastically fly about rebuilding the entire town to your ownpersonal taste. This is fun in itself. Zombies are not very intelligent until you are within a couple of feet, at this stage they jump at you and throttle you. This may be a little unfair as it is otherwise difficult to attract their attention. City movement is very fast when flying around in the helicopter, so much so that it makes *Ant Attack* look very slow. On the other hand, in *Ant Attack* the ants were onto your trail very rapidly, but here the zombies seem to be infrequent and at times it can be hard to spot one. Overall, i don't think this is any significant improvement over *Ant Attack,* and in fact I think *Ant Attack* is the more playable game. I would have thought that as Sandy White gave the Spectrum such a tremendous lift with the soft solid graphics of *Ant Attack* that the follow-up game would also have given another lift, not so much in 3D graphics but in a 3D game where the game con-

PIONEER

Producer: **Atlantis**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Language: **machine code**
Author: Andy Backhouse

The cassette cover for *Pioneer* shows a jetcopter firing blasts at what looks like a group of Manhattan skyscrapers. Only we know that this isn't New York, but the fabled city from 'Scramble;. *Pioneer* is a sort of 'Scramble' type game in which you fly your helicopter across various types of terrain, through caverns and a convoluted city while asteroids, missiles and other alien things try and stop you. On the ground there are installations to be shot up for points and – what makes *Pioneer* quite different to any other 'Scramble' type – humans which wave as you pass and may be winched up to safety, along with various sorts of valuable cargo.



Your PIONEER helicopter approaches a pair of lost humans.

The game itself may be defined by the player to a degree, and the option menu allows for selecting whether you will have no guided missiles, intelligent missiles, unlimited fuel, unlimited rockets, an easy, moderate or hard landscape to cope with.

On the harder levels of landscape, life becomes very hard indeed. The terrain includes, hilly landscape, rocky caverns, the same with asteroids, a straight series of caverns with

tent was exceptional. This is my opinion, but don't let it put you off buying the game.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: Cursor keys and either zero or bottom row to fire
Joystick: Sinclair, Kempston, Protek, AGF
Keyboard play: very responsive and much simplier than in Ant Attack, though it might have been nicer to have an alternative to the cursors
Use of colour: quite nicely used, but not the ideal game because of attribute problems
Sound: 2 channel sound is provided if you have the right hardware, good helicopter noise, otherwise not much during game
Skill levels: 1
Lives: 3
Screens: large scrolling area, smaller than Ant Attack however
Special features: boy or girl option
General rating: good to very good though perhaps lacking in content.

Use of computer	78%
Graphics	84%
Playability	82%
Getting started	78%
Addictive qualities	80%
Value for money	79%
Overall	**80%**

DANGERMOUSE (In Double Trouble)



Producer: **Creative Sparks**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£6.95**
Language: **machine code**

Television characters are making it big in computer games just now what with The Fall Guy, Minder and now Dangermouse. Of all of them, Dangermouse is the most likely candidate – he being a graphic character already. *Double Trouble* is a three-part game, each game being very different. According to the scenario Crocodilian intelligence has just heard that the evil Baron Greenback has developed an android version of DM and the first one is about to be switched on. It could be curtains for London if Dangermouse and Penfold can't get to the secret base in time to prevent this dastardly event.

Part one sees DM and Penfold tucked safely in the aerocar, but Baron Greenback has dispatched a variety of flying robots to defend his base. The top half of the screen displays a horizontal picture with the aerocar at the left and the oncoming robots at different heights approaching from the right. This image is repeated head on at the bottom left. They are destroyed by playing a tune and this is done automatically on the easier level for a while, otherwise by selecting the correct robot in the VDU at bottom left. When the correct number of miles have been travelled, DM and Penfold have to hoof it through a jungle,

forcefields to be shot away and some with enemy craft, and finally the city. The copter takes off from a helipad at the start, and if you get far enough through a section before losing a life, the game returns you to the start of that section.

CRITICISM

● 'This is a 'Scramble' type of game where you need to winch up people, fuel and rockets, all the while avoiding the mountainous landscape, enemy missiles and enemy aircraft. The graphics don't move smoothly but this doesn't put the game to a serious disadvantage, and anyway, they are quite detailed and fast. Colour and sound have been used quite well. Everything works quite well although it is difficult to use the winch – you must be right over the object and hit the key instantly. This has the effect of stopping the otherwise continuous scrolling until the object has been secured. There is a very good change options feature where you can make the game easy or very hard. Overall, good value for money.'

● *'This is not an absolutely fantastic exciting game, but for only £1.99 it's very good. The graphics are average for the type (quite good, but perhaps a little on the simple side) and they scroll well, but jerkily. Sound, too, is above average. Winching people and things is very difficult and can be a problem, but it's the only way to get fuel and arms.'*

● '*Pioneer* is not a new sort of game, but it does have a few novel features such as the winch. In the main, scoring points by shooting things up is relatively easy, the main difficulty comes from the landscape which is pretty severe at times. The graphics are large and well detailed, colourful as well, but the scrolling movement is rather jerky and gives the program a somewhat old-fashioned feel to it. However, this does not spoil what is a fairly good version for the price. It isn't going to replace the thrills of *Penetrator*, or *Cavern Fighter*, but should certainly fill in a few hours of enjoyment.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: A/Z up/down, M = hover, SYM SHIFT = accelerate, SPACE = fire and CAPS = winch
Joystick: Kempston
Keyboard play: responsive
Use of colour: good
Graphics: block movement, big well detailed, above average
Sound: average generally, good helicopter start up
Skill levels: several options to select
Lives: 5

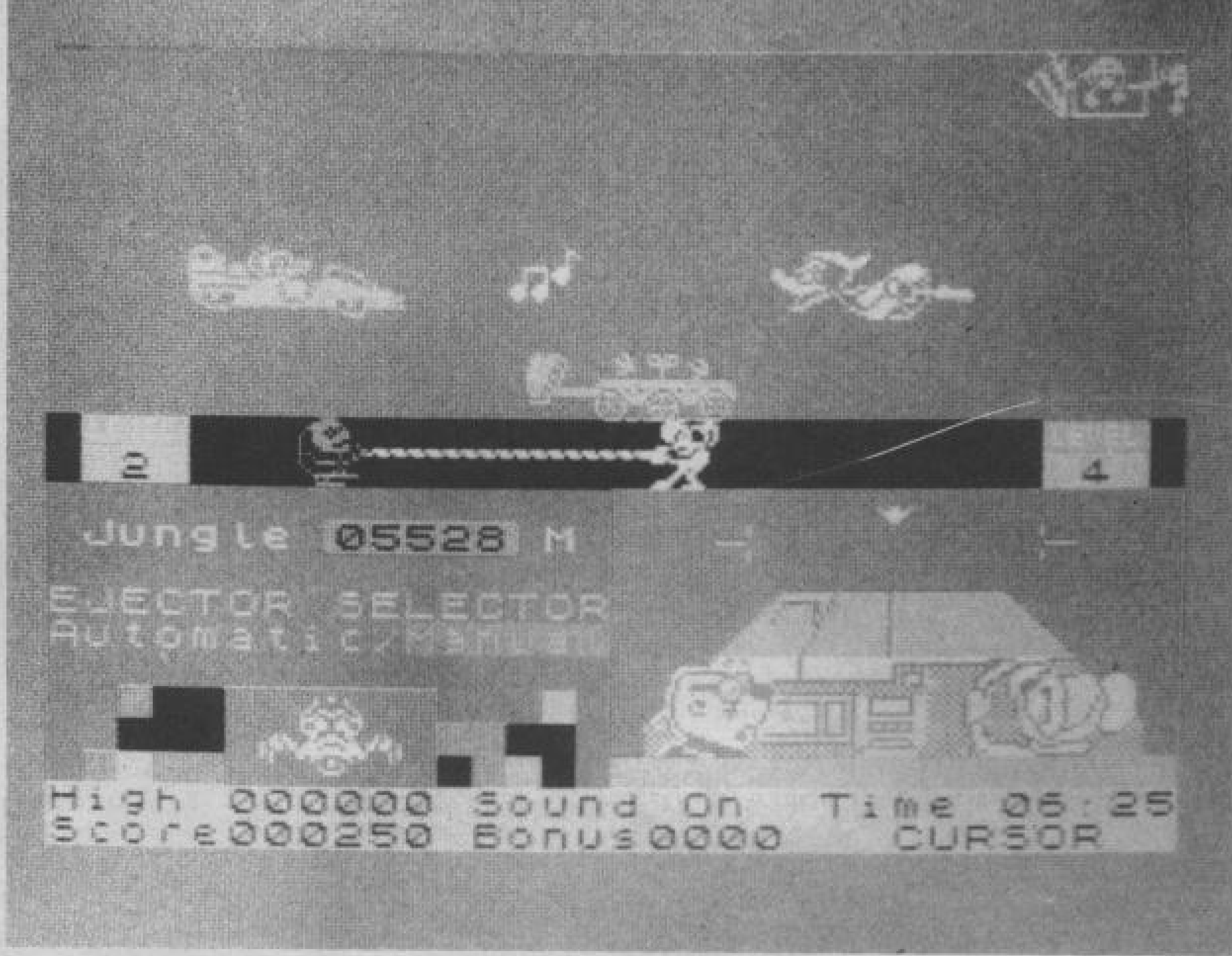


General rating: average, though good value for money.

Use of computer	68%
Graphics	63%
Playability	63%
Getting started	64%
Addictive qualities	63%
Value for money	78%
Overall	67%

hopping over swamps on the back of a crocodile and climbing a tree to avoid a mouse eating puma.

The third screen is set at the secret base where the android mouse is about to be electronically born. The object is to make DM leap up and bounce along a row of buttons which have the effect of altering the colours of the grid of lamps. Baron Greenback's finger can be seen pressing buttons on the side. If the light in line with DM's button is also in line with BG's button then the chain of yellow lights is decreased by one. Turning them all red saves the world.



Dangermouse and Penfold battle Greenback's flying robots in their attempt to reach the secret base.

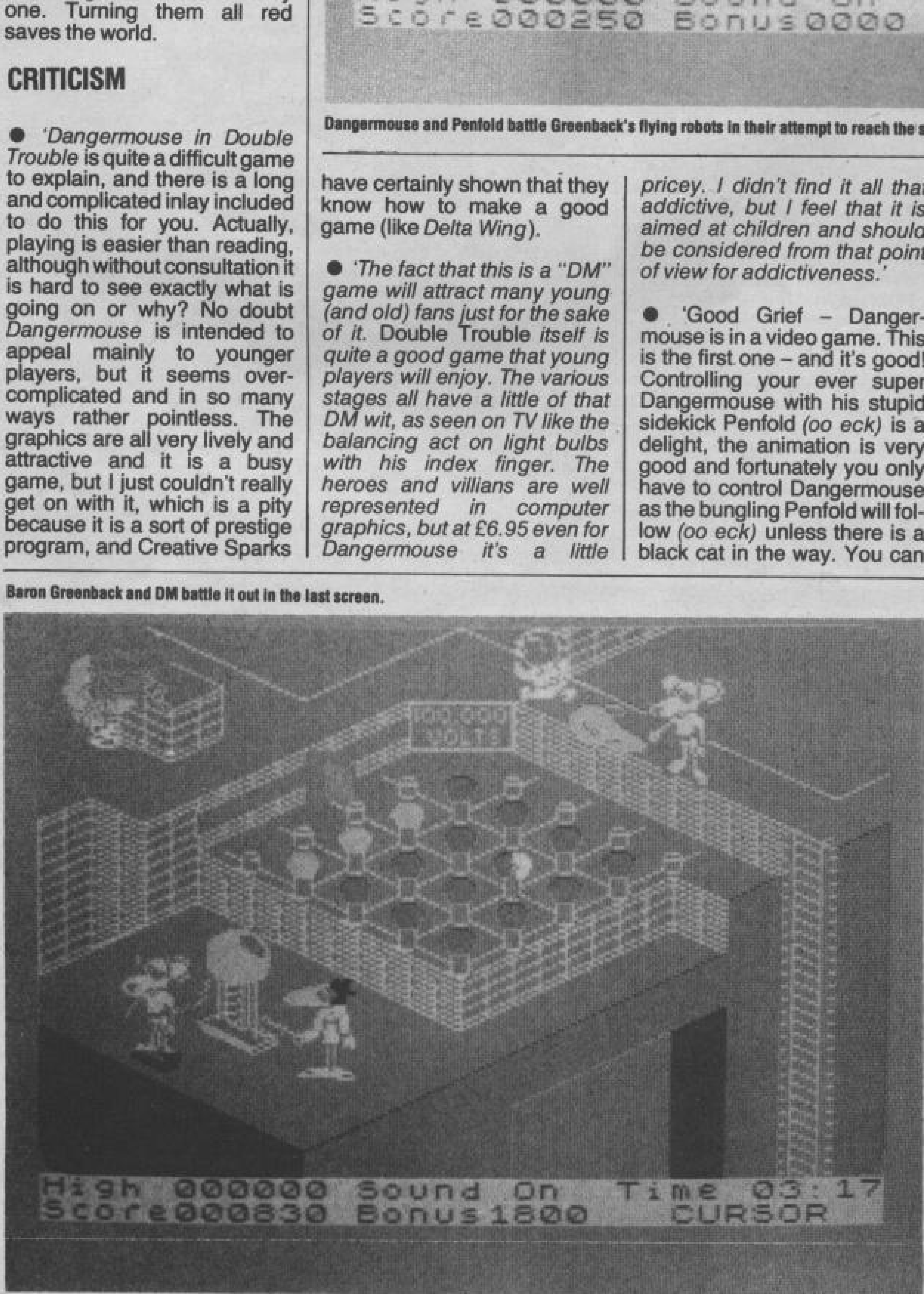
CRITICISM

● '*Dangermouse in Double Trouble* is quite a difficult game to explain, and there is a long and complicated inlay included to do this for you. Actually, playing is easier than reading, although without consultation it is hard to see exactly what is going on or why? No doubt *Dangermouse* is intended to appeal mainly to younger players, but it seems over-complicated and in so many ways rather pointless. The graphics are all very lively and attractive and it is a busy game, but I just couldn't really get on with it, which is a pity because it is a sort of prestige program, and Creative Sparks have certainly shown that they know how to make a good game (like *Delta Wing*).

● *'The fact that this is a "DM" game will attract many young (and old) fans just for the sake of it.* Double Trouble *itself is quite a good game that young players will enjoy. The various stages all have a little of that DM wit, as seen on TV like the balancing act on light bulbs with his index finger. The heroes and villians are well represented in computer graphics, but at £6.95 even for Dangermouse it's a little pricey. I didn't find it all that addictive, but I feel that it is aimed at children and should be considered from that point of view for addictiveness.'*

● 'Good Grief – Dangermouse is in a video game. This is the first one – and it's good! Controlling your ever super Dangermouse with his stupid sidekick Penfold *(oo eck)* is a delight, the animation is very good and fortunately you only have to control Dangermouse as the bungling Penfold will follow *(oo eck)* unless there is a black cat in the way. You can climb the tree and do a tarzan call and elephants will stampede the cat away. The game is split into three distinct stages, each graphically breathtaking (especially the third) and well executed. This is fun to play but not totally addictive. The graphics enhance the program and the sound isn't too bad. A must for Dangermouse fans but not for everyday arcadians.'

Baron Greenback and DM battle it out in the last screen.



COMMENTS

Control keys: 9/1 up/down, 1/2 left/right, zero to fire
Joystick: Kempston, Fuller, ZX1, AGF, Protek
Keyboard play: rather awkward keys but responsive
Use of colour: generally good, although some characters are a bit hard to see in jungle stage
Graphics: good to excellent with close resemblance to TV original
Sound: average
Skill levels: 2
Lives: time limit
Screens: 4 in 3 stages
General rating: good to very good for DM fans, perhaps less interesting to general arcade fans

Use of computer	80%
Graphics	85%
Playability	74%
Getting started	72%
Addictive qualities	67%
Value for money	71%
Overall	**75%**



Update:
Marooned on an alien world and with a desperate quest on your hands you are inclined to take all offers of help that come your way. Even if an offer comes from someone or something pretty nasty, the last thing you do is shoot him, or it, dead . . .

THE TERMINAL MAN





STORY BY KELVIN GOSNELL© DRAWN BY OLIVER FREY©


SOON THE VORTEX STRAIGHTENED OUT AND DELIVERED THEM TO A WIDE SPACIOUS HALL...
WHAT IS THIS PLACE, CROSS? WHO BUILT IT?
YEAH, AND SINCE THEY LEFT THE LIGHT ON ARE THEY STILL HERE?
MY GUESS IS THAT THIS IS A PORT, PROBABLY THE ONE THEY USED WHEN THEY DESERTED THE SYSTEM... IT ONLY HAS A 'WAY IN' FOR PASSENGERS –
NO 'WAY OUT' –
– AS THESE INDIVIDUALS DISCOVERED WHEN THEY CAME DOWN...
AND JUST HOW ARE WE TO GET OUT, CROSS?
FIRST WE FIND OUR FUEL CELLS – THEN WE THINK ABOUT IT, COME ON!
THE SEARCH LED THEM DOWN ONE OF THE SMALLER SIDE PASSAGES, THE LIGHTING HAD FAILED HERE...
CROSS, I DON'T LIKE THIS...
NOR I –
– I SENSE SOMETHING ALIVE HERE –
AIEEEE!!



What now, Cross?

STRIKE ATTACK 2

Producer: **Micro Mart**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£6.95**
Language: **Basic**
Author: **Flt. Lt. J.T.F. Dyer**

Micro Mart have released an improved version of their earlier *Strike Attack* game.

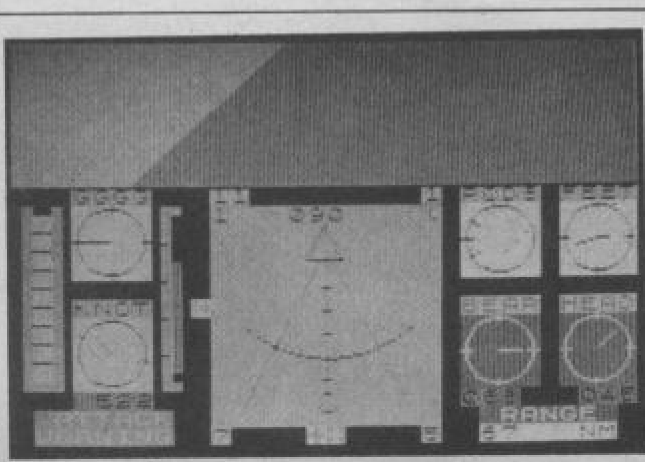
The program is a cockpit simulation game, which relies entirely on instrument guidance. You are the Navigator/Weapons Systems Operator (WSO) of a Strike Attack aircraft en route to its target. The run starts off at 10,000 feet heading 090° at 400 knots. The target is within a range of 70nm. The aim of the game is to stay alive long enough to reach the target and score a hit. The main defence instrument is the Radar Warning Receiver (RWR) which informs you of any attacks from enemy fighters, Anti Aircraft Artillery (AAA) Surface to Air Missiles (SAMs). the enemy is not to be engaged. The main defence consists of evasive action, breaking hard left or right (4 to 6g force should get your blood stirring!) and changing altitude.

CONTROLS

The cursors control the general motion of the aircraft, left and right turn, rate of climb/descent. The program is not an arcade style game, as it is written in Basic. The response to any input and the display update take several seconds. This requires keys for hard turns of 4 and 6g (breaks). To defeat an attack, a break is required to shake off any enemy plane or missile. Speed is controlled by increasing or decreasing the throttle setting or activating the air-brake. The final target run requires 2 degree adjustments left or right. After a successful attack evasion 'Y' will level the wings and reduce all rates of turn to zero. The 'pickle button', which is the bomb release is represented with key B.

INSTRUMENTATION

The main instrument is the Radar Warning Receiver, which is simulated by flashing symbols in the appropriate clock positions around the map/position display. The map displays the bearing sector of 060 to 120 degrees for the attack and your position is displayed by a marker. The set of instuments include an altimeter, RCDS (Rate of Climb or Descent) meter, bearing and heading indicators, a range to target indicator, throttle setting, airspeed indicator, G-force meter and the fuel meter. The cockpit view acts as a horizon meter with a green ground and cyan sky.



THE GAME

On start-up a menu displays three choices. Training mode, which allows you to continue even after being hit by enemy fire, Range practice, which leads you straight to the final 7nm bomb-run (avoiding any attacks from the enemy) and Fully operational, which drops you into the deep end of the matter, the real strike attack. The probability of an attack depends on the flight altitude taken, so it is best to level off below 2000 feet. The approach up to 50nm of the target is riddled with enemy fighter attacks. The approach line will consist of breaks to port or starboard, a break lasting as long as the attack itself. By the time you have weaved yourself within the 50nm range, you will be pleased to know that you will only need to dodge AAA or SAM attacks. The AAA attacks will require a change of altitude to disrupt the artillery range setting. When the range falls below 7nm, the range scale of the map changes to 7nm. There are no further attacks and the final run can be made. The ideal height should be 200 feet with a speed of 500 knots. The bomb should be released at a range of 600 yards with 0 degree angle of bank and fully level flight. The score will be displayed at the end of the game.

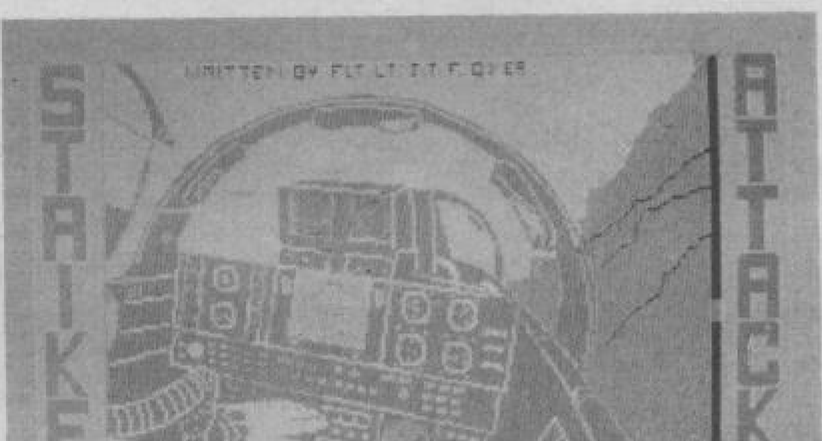
CRITICISM

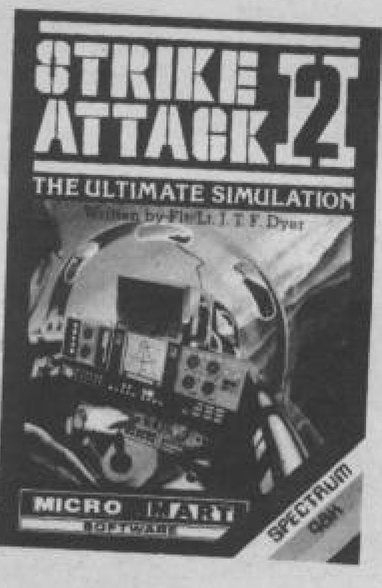
The game idea is very similar to *Omega Run* by CRL and yet the two games are hardly recognisable. *Omega Run* is an exciting arcade game with its bomb run mission, where *Strike Attack 2* is lacking totally any adrenalin-flowing ingredients. The simulation aspect of the game is also very poor, as the main pastime of teh game is the hard breaking with the long wait for the attack to break off. There are no clever decisions to be taken, no strategy, as avoiding an attack is purely and simply a reactions test – but with a response time of several seconds this can hardly be called hair-raising.

At least with *Hunter Killer* by Protek the target is moving and several calculations must be performed to locate the target (taking several factors into consideration), thus hiding the crude response and display of a game written in Basic.

The background is very credible and the technical aspect (including the RAF jargon) is very interesting, but after a run or two there will be very little interest in the game itself.

For aircraft fanatics only!





COMMENTS

Control Keys: cursor for left/right, climb, descend S,K for 4g left or right breaks A, L for 6g right breaks V Airbrake, 0 and R 26g left/right correction Y level wings Q, Z Throttle up, down B release bomb
(A keyboard overlay master is included)
Joystick: Cursor type
Keyboard play: Good
Use of colour: Good
Graphics: Good, but slow update (4 sec.)
Sound: Audio warnings only
Skill levels: 1
General rating: For aircraft addicts only

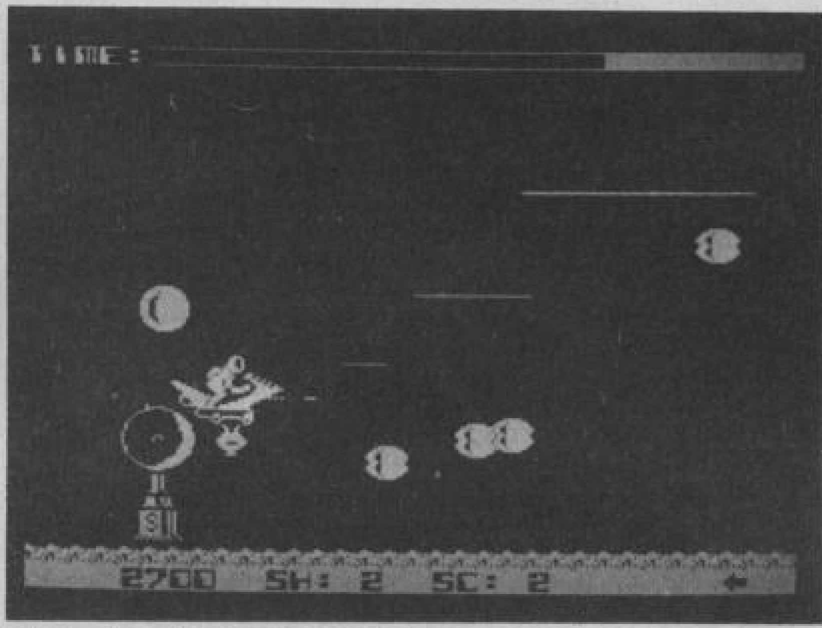
Use of Computer	45%
Graphics	48%
Playability	43%
Getting started	65%
Addictive qualities	32%
Value for money	51%
Overall	47%

STARBIKE

Producer: **The Edge**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£6.95**
Language: **machine code**
Author: **Paul Curtis**

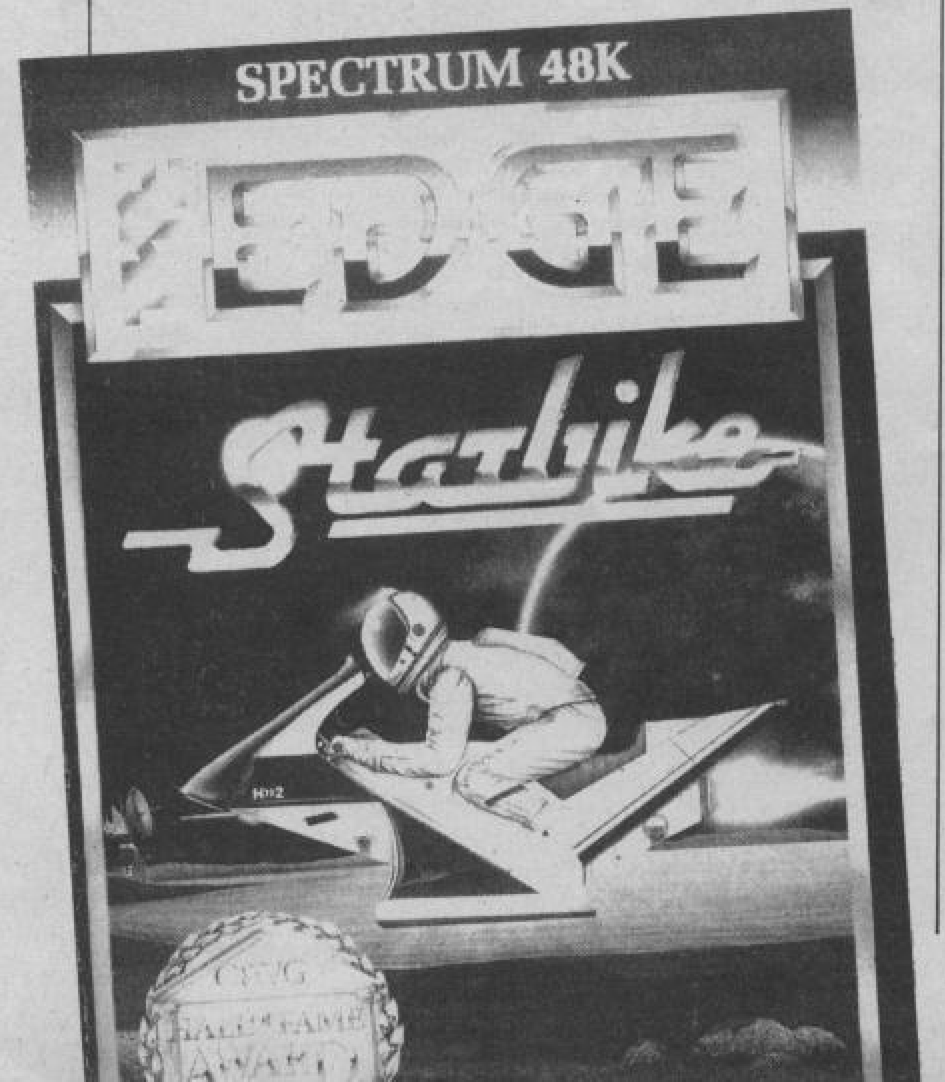
The Edge is a new name in Spectrum software, but not newcomers because these are the programmers, under a different name, that produced material for Softek. With the demise of Imagine, The Edge are claiming to be the producers of the first true mega-games. *Starbike* is being pushed as the first game ever to be "voted" into *Computer & Video Games'* Hall of Fame before its release.

The object is to collect lost aliens from several planets while avoiding the multitudes of space debris floating around. It begins with your lunar lander ariving on the planet surface. Hundreds of aliens (space debris) floats, bounces and spins around. The landscape also contains a large radar dish or scanner, as well as various devices that shoot at Starbiker or hinder his progress. He emerges from the rescue craft already on his jet bike which is armed with continuous automatic laser fire. Near to the lander is an alien depository. Flying to the large scanner and stopping on top of it will result in a small



Alien hanging neatly below the STARBIKE you head for the dustbin to dump it in.

arrow appearing in the base score line which indicates the direction of the next alien to be rescued. The aliens are small yellow balls with stalks that bounce up and down in a somewhat carefree manner considering that thay are lost! They are collected by running over them and then they hang beneath the bike until you can dump them into the depository. The process is then repeated until all the lost aliens have been found. As it isn't stated on each screen how many there are on a planet it requires careful attention to the scanner. Returning with an alien to the lander will result in its taking off for another planet, possibly leaving some unrescued aliens behind, and for this crime, points are docked from your score. Starbiker is provided with a shield value of five, and hitting any debris will knock the shields down by one. There is only one life in what is designed as a high scorers' game.



CRITICISM

● '*Starbike* is very similar to a well known game by the name of *Lunar Jetman*! The game style is very similar indeed. Personally I thought *Lunar Jetman* had the better graphics though this is a little more playable (but perhaps not as addictive). A price tag of £6.95 makes this much worse value for money than *LJM*. After reading all the PR blurb I decided that they are over-rating it. Yes, it is excellent but not "the most impressive of its kind yet launched." *Starbike* does tend to build up as you go along and progress.'

● *'What set* Lunar Jetman *apart from so many other shoot em ups was the attention to detail with every graphic character being well designed in all respects. It would be hard to get away from comparing* Starbike *to* Lunar Jetman, *but here there are a few let downs on the graphics side. The landing rescue craft is very disappointing and for a horizontal scrolling game, the very strong base line which acts as ground does not scroll, and at first this gives a strange impression that you're not getting anywhere with the left and right keys until a scanner goes sailing by underneath. The alien and debris graphics are very neatly done and animated although there wasn't much alteration between early levels (haven't got any further yet).* Starbike *is a good shoot em up hi-scoring game that should keep people amused for some time, and it is quite challenging to play with only one life and very few shields for all that debris.'*

● 'Starbike is a scrolling fast shoot em up, rescue game with very good graphics and sound and which uses Currah microspeech for voice sounds. The option menu is excellent with various selections to be made and graphic devices above to show you what has been selected. Also, the hall of fame entry mode is marvellous with two arrows between which scrolls the alphabet. I think this is the quickest and best I've ever seen on any game. With continous fire leaving only three keys to control the game it is far more playable than *Lunar Jetman*, which it resembles, but I don't think it's as addictive to play because the overall content is a bit lower. No doubt it will prove very popular with hi-scorers.'

COMMENTS

Control keys: Q-T thrust, bottom row alternate keys = left/right
Joystick: Kempston, Protek, AGF, Fuller, Sinclair
Keyboard play: very responsive, simple keys
Use of colour: quite good
Graphics: fast, large, well detailed and smooth, a few details lacking here and there
Sound: good
Skill levels: progressive difficulty
Lives: only 1 with 5 shields
Screens: scrolling
Special features: 1 or 2 player games, uses Currah microspeech, also offers of raffle, with every copy having possible winning numbers for a free subscription to C&VG or one of several BMX bikes.
General rating: a very good shoot em up with a reasonable addictivity and very playable, a slight pity it's priced as highly.

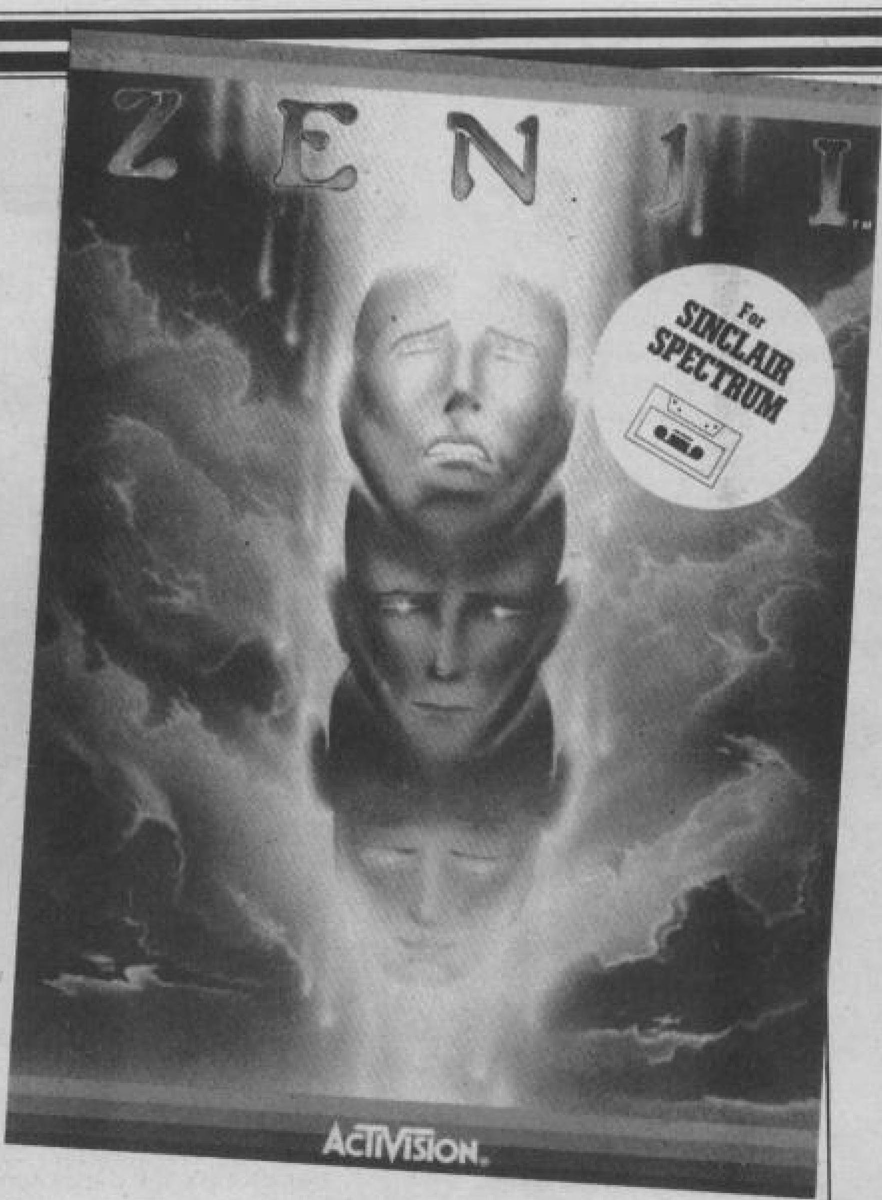
Use of computer	84%
Graphics	80%
Playability	78%
Getting started	80%
Addictive qualities	69%
Value for money	70%
Overall	77%

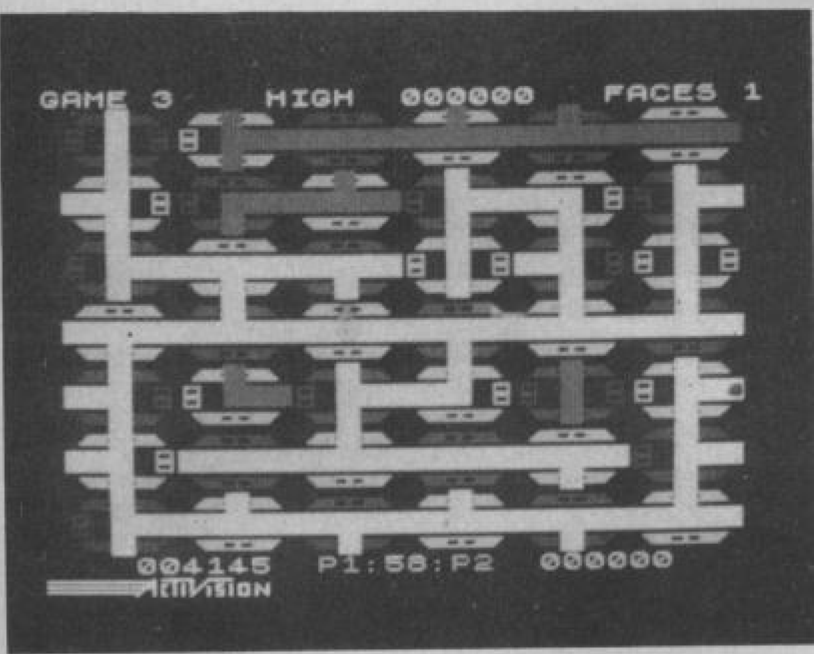
ZENJI

Producer: Activision
Memory required: 48K
Retail price: £7.95
Language: machine code
Author: Matt Hubbard

Zenji is a rather difficult game to describe, and even Activision themselves prefer to let the inlay slip into esoteric eastern mysticism! The object of *Zenji*, it says, is to connect all Elements to the Source. But, in playing the game, it becomes clear that the approach required is a kind of letting go, rather than planning ahead.

(you score each time you make a right connection) if you connect up a section of path to the main part which contains a flashing number, which decreases each second after it appears. You are also pursued by flames of desire, more of them as you progress. These must by either avoided by running away, or blocked off by the fortuitous revolving of a gate which may close off their path to you. To make matters even worse there is a very strict time limit imposed. If you succeed, then you move onto a bigger maze, whereas failure to connect up in time results in being returned to the same maze for another try.





So what is *Zenji*? Well it is a kind of comuter puzzle, yet it seems to have been programmed in such a way that the obvious is excluded. There seems to be no, 'Ah got it!' stage in playing the game, whereby you suddenly see the point and then know how to go about it. Each screen provides a maze of increasing size and complexity with each maze intersection being contained within a red or green gate. At the start some pathways are coloured yellow and some blue. You are a small revolving face, and the object is to make all the paths yellow. This is done by moving to an intersection and revolving the gate. This has the effect of perhaps cutting you off from the path you have just traced, whilst opening other connections and turning a new section yellow. By moving around thus, it is possible to find the right gates in the right combination to make all the maze paths turn yellow.

Bonus scores are added on

CRITICISM

● '*Zenji* is an odd combination of straightforward puzzle game and oriental mantra. I don't know whether it's fair to call it addictiveness that kept me playing, or whether it was hypnotism! The game certainly has something though. My main worry as far as Activision is concerned, is that lots of people flicking through the inlay card will be put off the game because is says so little. That may well be the point, but it can't help sales surely? All I can say is that it's well worth spending some time getting the hang of the game. The graphics are super-neat, especially the revolving effect. I also like 'you,' really having a ball with a face on either side and you can see the details of both faces as it revolves, left and right as well as up and over. I don't know whether I could recommend this game because it's so hard to explain and someone might well buy it and hate it – all I know is that I enjoyed it totally – very absorbing.'

● *'It had to happen sometime – a game in which you must rely on intuition, sensing, letting go and all the usual psychic powers bit to compete. Well I gave it a go and after losing several times I still hadn't go a clue. Then after completing the path several times, I still hadn't got a clue. Maybe I'm some sort of emotionless zombie or android or something, but I sure couldn't let go and 'feel' the way. I don't think I'm addicted – but it's different. I hope it's me and this not a case of the King's new clothes – remember the invisible ones?'*

● 'At first I couldn't play this game at all – what was the idea I said? After about 15 minutes the idea became apparent – it was a simple idea, just the fact that it was mindbending and overwhelming made it damned difficult. On the inlay card it says, "Players can feel their way through the maze and use tactics that combine intuition with technical skill." I didn't understand that at first, but now I appreciate this statement after playing the game for a couple of hours. The graphics, colour and sound have been used very well. I cannot complain at all. Perfect! After about 2 hours I'm just getting into this mindbending game, a totally addictive, playable one that is worth every penny. Only your mind will win this game, not just fast reactions. Brill!'

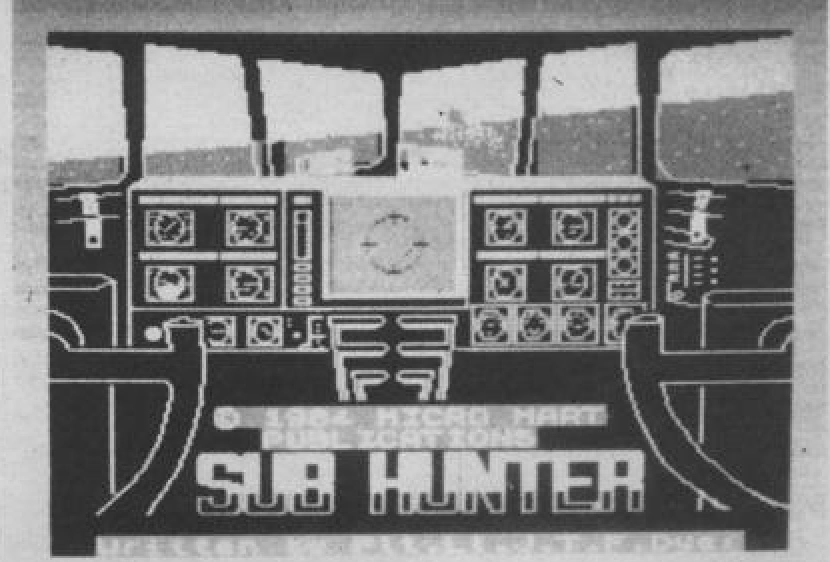
COMMENTS

Control keys: Z/W up/down, O/P left/right, Z to turn
Joystick: Kempston, Sinclair, Protek, AGF
Keyboard play: good positions and responsive
Use of colour: very good, very colourful
Graphics: good, smooth and fast although simple
Sound: simple but continuous
Skill levels: progressive difficulty, 8 entry points
Lives: 3
Special features: 2-player games
General rating: highly original and challenging puzzle type game which will probably meet a mixed reception!

Use of computer	80%
Graphics	75%
Playability	92%
Getting started	75%
Addictive qualities	97%
Value for money	80%
Overall	83%

SUBHUNTER

Producer: **Micro Mart**
Memory required: **48K**
Retail price: **£6.95**
Language: **Basic**
Author: **Flt. Lt. J.T.F. Dyer**



From the same author as *Strike Attack 2* comes *Subhunter*, another highly technical simulation game stuffed full of RAF jargon. The setting is above sea-level and the mission is the dreary routine check for enemy subs in friendly waters. The uneventful period has been omitted from the game and on start-up a 6 by 6 mile area where the sub was last spotted is indicated briefly on the map. The mission is clear cut: Detect the submarine, track and destroy it. Your Nimrod Mk 2 provides you with the necessary instruments and weapons. A Magnetic Anomaly Detector (MAD) boom which picks up any magnetic disturbances caused by large lumps of metal (subs), 5 active and 2 sonar buoys.

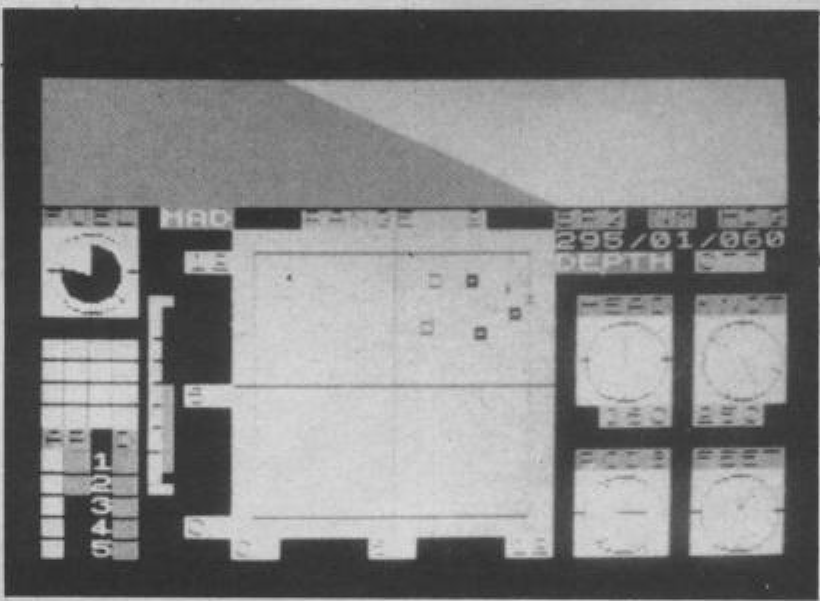
Passive sonar buoys detect sonar waves transmitted within a range of 2 miles, active sonar buoys emit sonar waves and pick up their reflections from any solid objects within 3 miles. More effective than the passive version, they have the knack of making (sonar) waves and therefore warning the enemy of your presence. The buoys have to be dropped from a height not greater than 250 feet it they are to stay intact on impact and have a battery life of 15 min. (Obviously the RAF could do with a couple of Duracells)! Once tracked, you start to drop nastier packages than buoys. 5 depth charges are available and can be set to detonate at depths ranging from 1 to 500 feet making sure anyone within 0.25 mile range gets deaf ears.

THE DISPLAY

The Nimrod Mk 2 cockpit features all the usual instruments. In the central position, the sonar buoys location and the sonar detected position of the sub. 3 scale ranges are available, 6 x 6, 12 x 12 and the full 24 x 24 mile operating area. To the left is an indication of which sector is being displayed on the detail map. The flight information includes throttle position, fuel gauge, airspeed indicator, rate of climb/descent (RCDS), altimeter and compass heading. The status of the seven buoys can be read at all times. MAD indicates with a flashing signal and a warbling sound the presence of a submarine within 5 miles. On successful triangulation the buoys will display the estimated bearing, range, heading and depth of the sub.

THE GAME

Upon display of the last sighting of the sub, course must be set for the indicated 6 x 6 mile area while at the same time descending to the operating level of below 250 feet. The MAD boom may then be activated and a search pattern initiated until a MAD warning is received. The speed can be reduced to about 250 knots for better manouvrability and the sonar buoys dropped in a triangular pattern. If at least three of the buoys are picking up a signal from the sub (indicated by bold squares or circles), then the tracking is accurate enough for a drop of depth charges. The Nimrod must be manouvered over the target area and the depth charges dropped with the correct depth setting.



A gentle turn to the right brings the enemy closer in SUB HUNTER.

CRITICISM

The feel of the game is very similar to *Hunter Killer* from Protek. The program is in Basic and the response and display update time is in the region of seconds rather than milliseconds. This makes for a very crude control of the Nimrod with turn rates of 20 degrees (although 2 degree corrections can be made for the final kill). The search is in real time. Consequently the buoys will provide you with 15 minutes of tracking info and care must be taken not to dawdle. Following the instructions will guarantee spotting and tracking of the sub, the actual kill is more difficult, but not impossible even on the first mission. In fact, after several successful kills the game does not prove to be any challenge anymore, as the sub doesn't take any convincing evasive action and the Nimrod can concentrate fully on the task without any other intervention or danger to itself. The game does not provide progressive difficulty levels and once the hunt has been successful three times in a row, the interest will wane. Now how about clearing up all these sub infested fjords. . .

COMMENTS

Control keys: cursor keys, Q, Z for throttle up/down T, Y for 2 degree left or right, M for MAD boom A for active buoy drop, P for passive B for depth charge drop with 0 to 4 for depth setting, 1, 2, 3 for scale selection
Joystick: Cursor type
Keyboard play: Very long response time
Use of colour: Good
Graphics: very slow but good
Sound: Simple beeps and warbles
Skill levels: 1
General rating: Interesting simulation game, would improve if written in M/C. Fairly high price for Basic program

Use of Computer	49%
Graphics	59%
Playability	53%
Getting started	69%
Addictive qualities	52%
Value for money	63%
Overall	**58%**



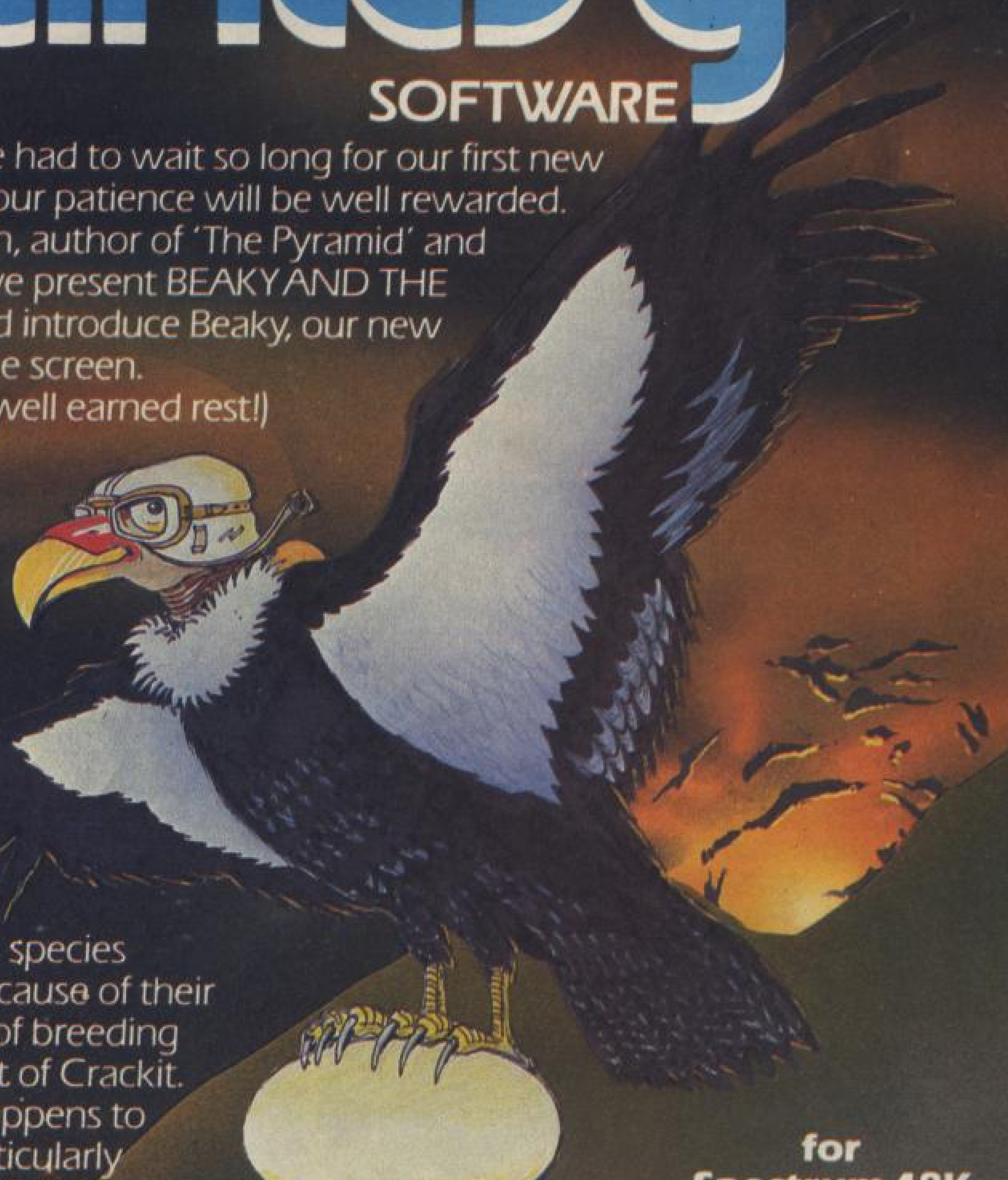
fantasy SOFTWARE

We're sorry you've had to wait so long for our first new release of 1984 but your patience will be well rewarded.

From Bob Hamilton, author of 'The Pyramid' and 'Doomsday Castle' we present BEAKY AND THE EGGSNATCHERS and introduce Beaky, our new star of the video-game screen.

(Ziggy is having a well earned rest!)

Beaky belongs to the family of Andromedan Armed Condors, the rare goggled variety.



The numbers of his species are dwindling fast because of their rather foolish choice of breeding ground, on the planet of Crackit. This unfortunately happens to be the home of a particularly evil band of creatures known collectively as the Eggsnatchers. Their sole malicious intent in life is to extinctify Beaky's species by stealing or destroying the eggs by any foul means available.

for Spectrum 48K and Commodore 64

BEAKY and the Egg Snatchers

Your objective is to try and brood, hatch out and rear as many little Beakys as possible through 12 different screens of formidable but delightful arcade action.

FANTASY SOFTWARE is available from W.H.SMITHS, JOHN MENZIES, BOOTS, WOOLWORTHS, LASKYS, GREENS, RUMBELLOWS, SPECTRUM GROUP and all other good software retailers.

Beaky and the Eggsnatchers is available for 48K Spectrum and Commodore 64 at £6.50 on cassette or on disk for the Commodore 64 at £9.50 from

FANTASY SOFTWARE, FAUCONBERG LODGE, 27A ST GEORGES ROAD, CHELTENHAM, GLOS GL50 3DT despatched by return first class post together with free membership of the Fantasy Micro Club.

Trade Enquiries welcome – telephone 0242-583661.

NOT JUST A PRETTY Inter FACE!

This superb new interface is one of our very latest developments for your Spectrum.
Offering even more features, and as it's programmable from the keyboard or with the cassette supplied you can now use it with any software.

Features include:-

- 17 directional movement
- Keyboard fully functional
- Rear connector for other add-ons
- Microdrive compatible



ONLY £22.95

NOT JUST A PRETTY Inter FACE!

The Spectrum dual port joystick interface is a highly versatile and price competitive joystick interface offering two joysiick ports.
The first port simulates 6,7,8,9, & 0 keys. The second port simulates in (31) command.
The ports will accept any Atari style joystick.
It will run any software. That is:-

- Using keys 6,7,8,9 & 0.
- Having redefinable key functions.
- Using in (31) (i.e. Kempston).



ONLY £13.00

NOT JUST A PRETTY Inter FACE!

The new dk'tronics Parallel Centronics Interface will link your Spectrum to any printer with a standard centronics input. As the choice is vast, you can select the printer exactly suited to your needs.

Features of the Interface include:

- Runs all parallel centronics type printers
- Controlling software fully relocatable
- Interfaces with any software using the printer channel e.g. Tasword Dev pack etc.
- LLIST LPRINT recognised. High res screen dumps
- All control codes allowed through to printer
- Fully microdrive compatible
- Supplied with full instructions and controlling software

All dk'tronics products are covered by a comprehensive guarantee.



ONLY £39.95

NOT JUST A PRETTY Inter FACE!

Our new generation light pen and interface is designed specifically for your Spectrum and works down to pixel level for complete accuracy.

Now you can produce high resolution illustrations with the 16 pre-defined instructions, selected from the screen controlled menu. Change colour, border, paper, ink. Draw circles, arcs, boxes or lines. You can fill in objects with colour, insert text or draw freehand, save and load completed or partially completed screens onto and from a tape and with a 48K Spectrum retain screens in memory and animate.

You can also use the machine codes in your own programmes for selecting from a menu, playing games etc. (all entry points supplied).

The interface fits neatly into position and comes complete with software cassette.



ONLY £19.95

Please rush me the following:

........Programmable Interface(s) ....£______
........Dual Port Interface(s)...................£______
........Parallel Centronics Interface(s)........£______
........Light Pen and Interface(s)...............£______

Please add post and packing..............................£ 1.25
I enclose cheque/PO/Cash for ...... Total £______
or debit my Access/Barclaycard No. [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]

Signature ______________________ Name ______________________

Address ____

Or send S.A.E. for the New D.K.Tronics Spectrum Catalogue

CM 11.84

dk'tronics

DK Tronics Ltd., Unit 6, Shire Hill Industrial Estate, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 3AQ. Telephone: (0799) 26350 (24 hrs) 5 lines

The Spectrum Connection

THE FINAL TOUCH

We've just added the final touch to our professional keyboard.
This new Microdrive compatible keyboard offers more key functions than any other in its price range. And the stepped keys and space bar make it even easier to use.
Our keyboard, constructed from high density black ABS, will take your Spectrum into the professional league.
It has 52 "stepped" keys plus space bar. A separate numeric key pad consisting of 12 red keys including a single entry 'delete' plus single entry 'decimal point', facilitate fast numeric data entry.
The 15" x 9" x 3" case will accommodate your Spectrum and other addons like interface 1, power supply etc. and forms an attractive self-contained unit.
All connections, power, Mic, Ear, T.V., network RS232 and expansion port are accessible at the rear.
A few minutes, a screwdriver and the simple instructions supplied are all you need to fit your Spectrum.
All dk'tronics products are covered by a comprehensive guarantee.

Constructed from high density block ABS

All connections accessible at rear



FOLLOW OUR LEAD FOR THE RIGHT CONNECTIONS

MICRO DRIVE EXTENSION LEAD

This is an 8" version of the micro 16 way drive lead. Sinclair's lead is only 4" long and for many applications this may not be long enough. It enables you to space the micro drive much further away from Interface I.

56 WAY RIBBON CONNECTOR

This is an extension cable that enables Spectrum peripherals to be distanced from the computer.
It is supplied 9" in length and will allow male or female connections to be made to the computer.
The connector has special lugs to enable easy fitting/removal from the computer's expansion port.





WINNING IS WITHIN YOUR GRASP

Quickshot Joystick I

- Super positive response
- 2 fire buttons
- Stabilising suction caps
- 4ft lead

Quickshot Joystick II

Incorporating all the features of 'Quickshot I' plus

- Improved control grip
- Trigger fire button
- Rapid fire option



SOUND IDEAS FOR YOUR SPECTRUM

Three Channel Sound Synthesiser interface incorporates a BEEP audio amplifier and a 3 channel sound sythesiser.
The BEEP amplifier improves the sound quality and output of the BEEP enormously. The 3 channel sound synthesiser adds a totally new dimension to sound on your Spectrum. It allows you to program your own music with harmonies, explosions, zaps, chimes, whistles and an infinite range of other sounds over a full 8 octaves. Based around the popular AY-3-8912 sound chip it gives you complete control (from basic or M/C) over 3 channels of tone and/or white noise, plus envelope and volume control. It comes with it's own pod mounted (4") speaker with 1 metre of cable so that it can be positioned anywhere.

Once this is fitted to the expansion port your programmes will never sound the same again!



Please rush me the following:

........Microdrive Compatible Keyboard(s).......£________
........Microdrive Extension Lead(s).............£________
........56 Way Ribbon Connector(s)...............£________
........Quickshot Joystick(s) I..................£________
........Quickshot Joystick(s) II.................£________
........Three Channel Sound Synthesiser..........£________
Please add post and packing......................£ 1.25
I enclose cheque/PO/Cash for ...... Total £________
or debit my Access/Barclaycard No. ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Signature ________ Name ________

Address ________

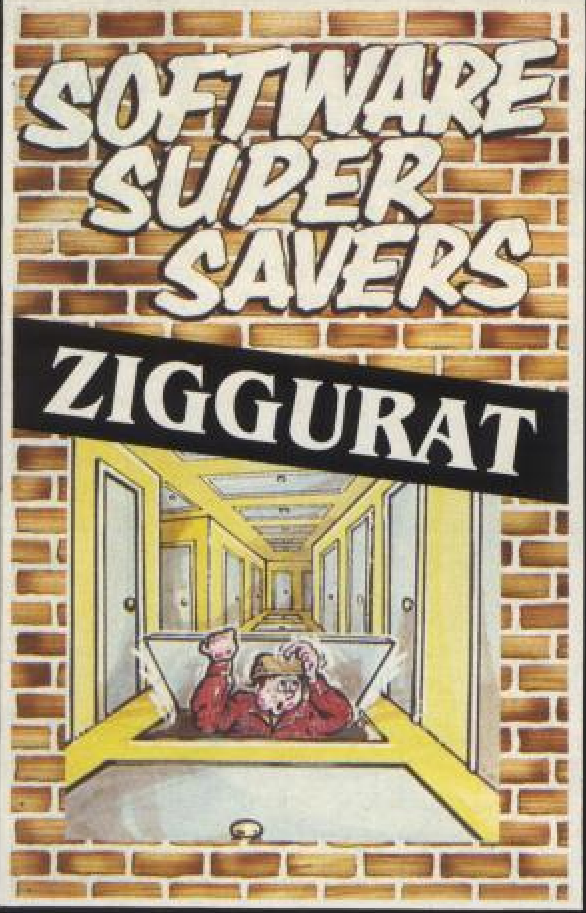
Or send S.A.E. for the New D.K.Tronics Spectrum Catalogue

CM.11.84

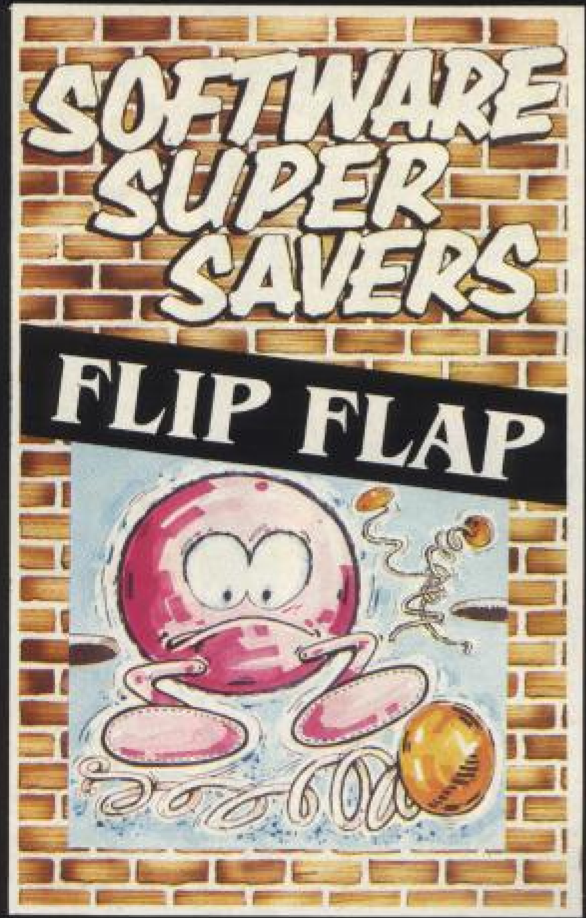
dk'tronics

DK Tronics Ltd., Unit 6, Shire Hill Industrial Estate, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 3AQ. Telephone: (0799) 26350 (24 hrs) 5 lines

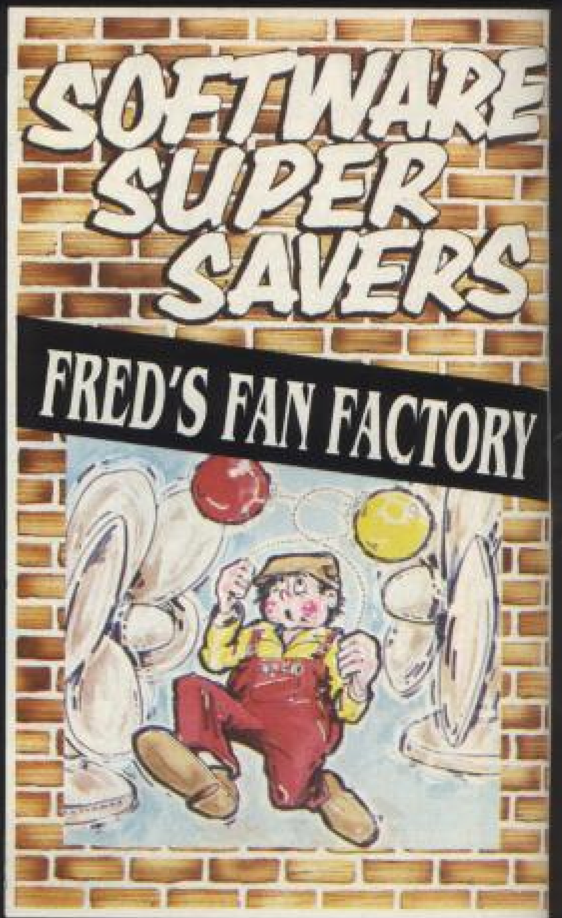
The Spectrum Connection



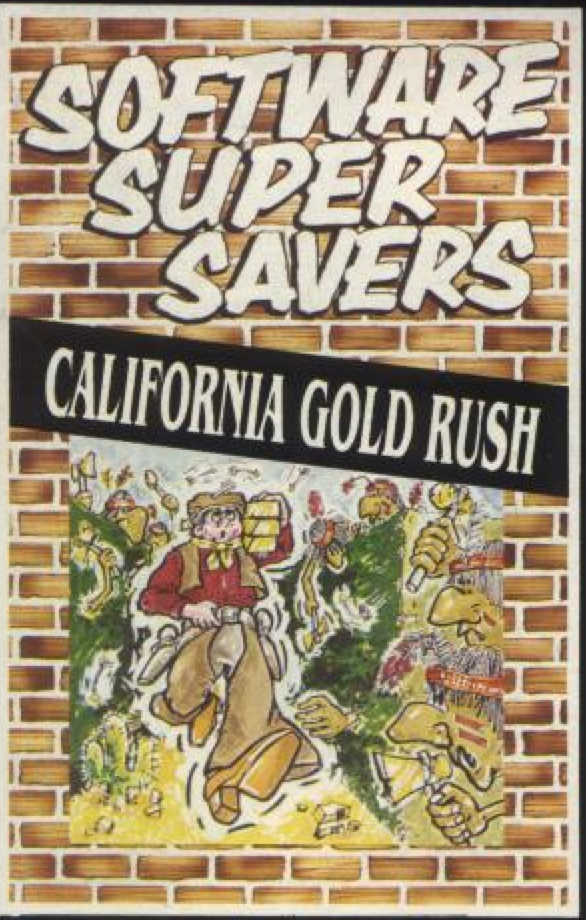
Lured by the promise of untold riches, our intrepid hero enters the temple of Ziggurat, a place of ill legend. All he has to do is grab the money and run, but he can't quite remember which way he came in, and what is that shuffling sound coming from the crypt.
Available on the 48K Spectrum.



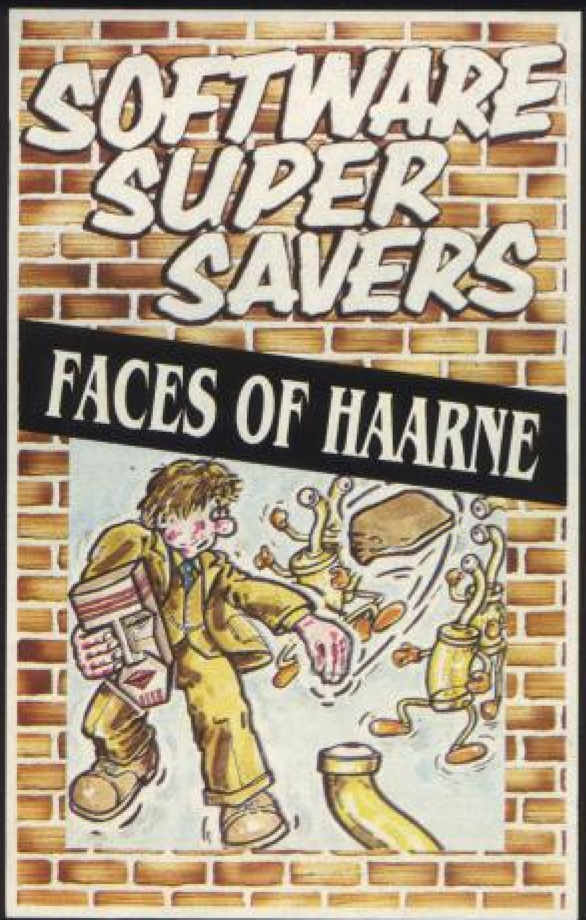
A pin ball game with a novel twist. There are twenty tables to be negotiated, each by reaching a target level. Each table has a different theme with original 'bonus' features. Will you dare to use the gamble feature? You could gain an extra ball – or lose 5,000 points!
Available on 48K Spectrum



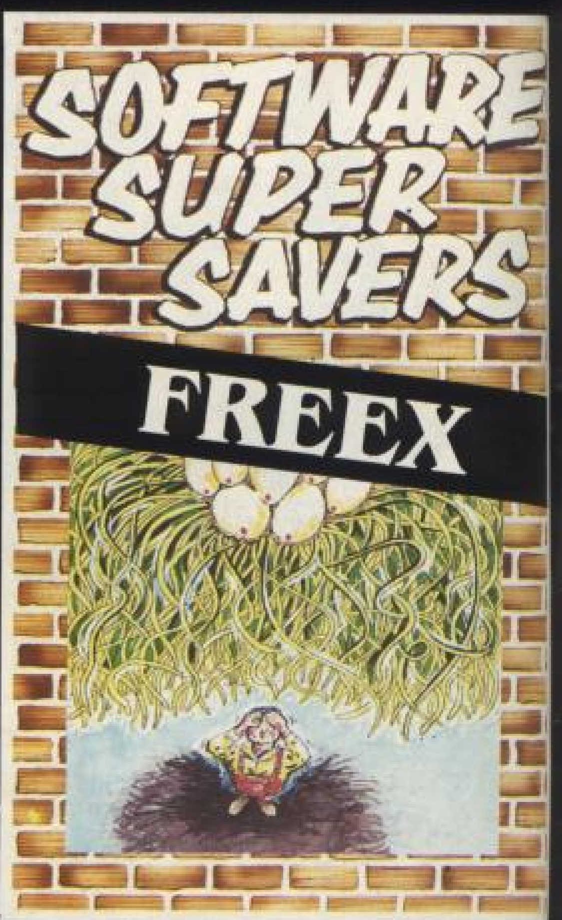
It's Fred's first day at his new job; guiding balloon men through the factory passages using fans to blow them to freedom. Easy? It looks that way until the balloon men come under seige from spinning knives, fireballs, spikes and explosives, Fred is starting to panic, can you help him.
Available on the 48K Spectrum.



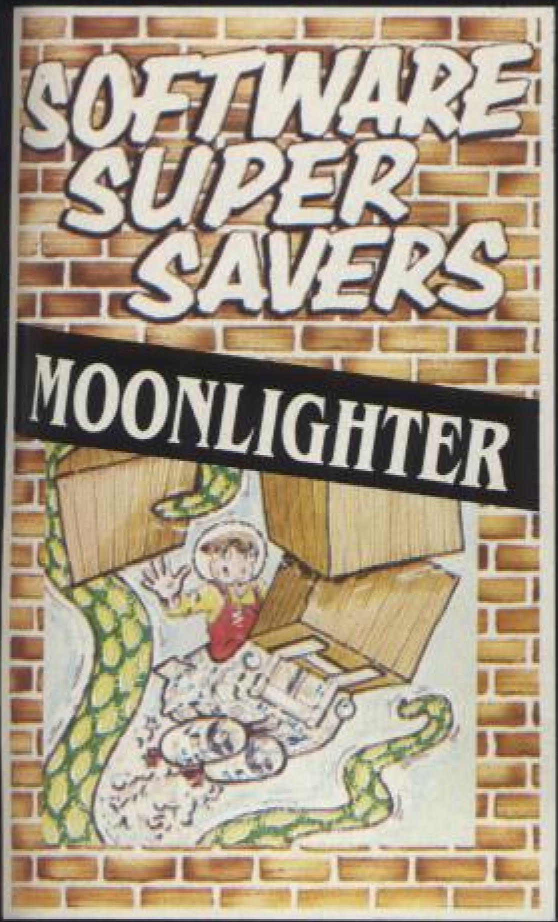
In the heart of hostile Indian Country, prospector Jake has discovered a fabulous fortune in gold, spread out in 24 rich fields. To claim these riches he has to fence off each mine. The Indians, alas, have other ideas, tearing down his fences and attacking him with arrows and tomahawks. Can Jake block the Indians with carefully placed sticks of dynamite and stake his claim to the fortune.
Available on the Commodore 64.



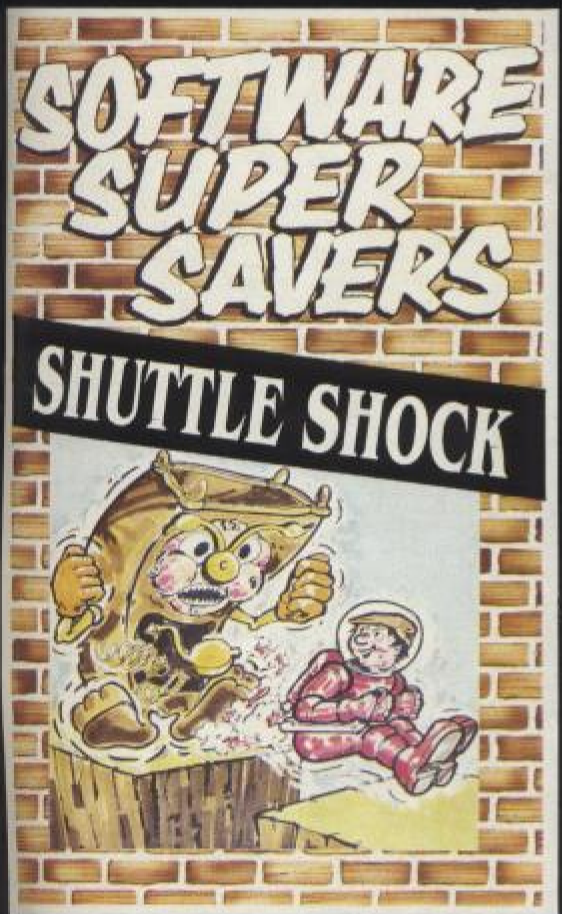
Night falls over the city and at the local museum Herbert the curator is doing his rounds. As he approaches the Green Room containing the mysterious and fabulously valuable "Faces of Haarne", strange noises can be heard from within. Armed with his steel-rimmed "Odd-Job" hat, Herbert enters the room. You won't believe what he encounters!
Available on the Commodore 64.



All has been quiet at the Trans-Cosmos outpost for the past 50 Intergalactic Standard Time Units. Suddenly, out of nowhere, appear hoardes of alien marauders – 100 waves of them. This is it; the moment you've been waiting for, the chance to gain your stripes.
Available on the 48K Spectrum.



You are the Commander of a Space Shuttle ferrying cargo to Arcturus and all planets north. Whilst checking the inventory, which includes Mega-Tennis Balls, Clockwork Oranges and Intoxo-Beverages, you hear some very peculiar sounds coming from the hold. Dare you investigate?
Available on 48K Spectrum.



Algernon the astronaut has crash-landed on the planet Epsilon XI and the power packs that propel his rocket have been dispersed around the planet. Algies efforts to re-assemble his power packs are hindered by some rather eccentric life forms; stinkers, mutant lawn mowers, grandfather clocks?? What kind of planet is this?
Available on the 48K Spectrum.

Software Supersavers is a new name to watch out for. We'll be bringing you quality software at a supersaver price. They're not re-hashes of old games but totally original ideas combining to give you an exciting range of new games.

So whatever your software tastes are, Software Supersavers has the game just right for you.

All games
£2.99
each

Dealer Enquiries –
051-428 6364 and ask for Lesley

Please send me a copy of

....

I enclose a cheque/PO for..
(Please add £1.00 for orders outside the UK)

Access Card No ....
Name...
Address..
....

Software Supersavers Ltd., P.O. Box 13, Liverpool L25 7AG

Software Supersavers Ltd., P.O. Box 13, Liverpool L25 7AG


25 EXCLUSIVE
COLLECTORS ITEMS
TO BE WON
Crash Competition
THE
GREAT
SPACE RA

Win the race to get a **GREAT SPACE RACE sweatshirt** from **LEGEND.** These won't be freely available! Be dressed properly to undertake the fabulous new Legend game as you join these other characters in their preparations for **The Great Space Race.**



MOVIESOFT 2 is almost here, and the follow up to the very successful *Valhalla* is bound to be a big hit. **The Great Space Race** comes in two distinct parts, firstly a preparation period where you battle with the computer to get hold of crews for the ships, and secondly the race itself – a game with no holds barred. We're not saying that a **GREAT SPACE RACE sweatshirt** will help you win, but it sure looks better to go down blazing in the proper colours!

As this is a game where it pays to be well prepared, we want to know how good your background space knowledge is, and when it comes to special effects zap em ups, there are several space fantasy movies that you should know about and from which you may well discover tips when it comes to playing **The Great Space Race.**

All you have to do to be a possible winner of a GREAT SPACE RACE sweatshirt from Legend is to answer the simple questions and send the answers in on the form provided to: **GREAT SPACE RACE COMPETITION, CRASH MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB** to arrive by first post **November 22.** Don't forget to fill in the size of sweatshirt you would like to receive. The first 25 correct answers from the bag will be the winners.

THE GREAT SPACE RACE COMPETITION

1. Name the three 'Star Wars' films
2. What is Han Solo's space ship called?
3. Who "phoned home"?
4. Who directed the film 'Close Encounters of the Third Kind'?
5. Name the two robots who star in the 'Star Wars' saga.

Name ....

Address ....

....

Postcode ....

If I win a **GREAT SPACE RACE sweatshirt,** please send me size..............

Sizes available are **S** (small), **M** (medium), **L** (large) **XL** (extra large).

CURRAH μSPEECH



Speech Synthesiser for ZX Spectrum

The **CURRAH μSPEECH** is ready to talk immediately on power-up, has an infinite vocabulary and outputs speech and ZX Spectrum sound through your TV speaker. There is no software to load with **μSPEECH** — sophisticated Gate Array technology means you can just plug in and start constructing words and sentences like this:

LET S$ = "sp(ee)k (nn)(oo) (ee)vII" will say "speak no evil"! Further commands control the "voicing" of keys as they are pressed, and an intonation facility allows you to add expression to the speech.

μSPEECH is fully compatible with ZX Interface 1 and may be used with the **CURRAH μSLOT** Expandable Motherboard, allowing easy expansion of your ZX system. **μSPEECH** and **μSLOT** will also be compatible with the **CURRAH μSOURCE** unit when it arrives later this year, allowing you to write **Assembler** and **FORTH** statements directly into your **BASIC** programs!

Top selling games like ULTIMATE'S Lunar Jetman feature **μSPEECH** voice output — watch out for other titles from Bug-Byte, CDS, Ocean, Quicksilva and PSS.

μSPEECH is available from COMET, W.H. SMITH, WOOLWORTHS, GREENS, BOOTS, JOHN MENZIES, SPECTRUM STORES and good dealers nationwide — or use the form to order the **CURRAH μSPEECH** — winner of the CTA 'Product of the Year' award 1984.

CURRAH

To: MicroSpeech Offer, P.O. Box 1, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, NE8 1AJ

Please Supply .... **MicroSpeech** unit(s) at **£29.95** each incl. VAT & P & P

.... **MicroSlot** unit(s) at **£14.95** each incl. VAT & P & P

Name (please print) ....

Address (please print) ....

.... Postcode ....

CR 3

I enclose a cheque/PO payable to 'MicroSpeech Offer' value £ ....

or debit my Access/BarclayCard No ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Cardholder Signature ....

Credit Card Hotline 091 - 482 4683

Please allow 28 days for delivery. Offer valid UK only

See us at the PCW Show Stand 329

One of America's most popular games

THE ULTIMATE IN BATTLE ACTION...

BEACH-HEAD™

SPECTRUM 48k



- Incredible 3-D Graphics
- Unbelievable Sound Effects
- Unique Games Concept
- Multiple Screens
- High Resolution Scenario
- 100% Machine Language

THE FIRST 64 GAME TO REACH No.1 IN THE CHARTS need we say more?

It's a unique arcade experience in sound and vision, and a stunning display of Spectrum capabilities.

Another quality product from ***ACCESS*** Software.



NOW AVAILABLE FOR THE 48k SPECTRUM £7·95

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

THE ULTIMATE IN AMERICAN SOFTWARE FOR YOU ON U.S. GOLD

U.S. Gold is stocked by all leading computer stores including: Boots WHSMITH

DEALERS! For information on how to become a U.S. Gold Stockist write to: Centresoft Ltd., Unit 24, Tipton Trading Estate, Bloomfield Road, Tipton, West Midlands DY4 9AH. Telephone: 021-520 7591.
Overseas enquiries welcome.

U.S. GOLD

All American Software